A

WIFE

To be LETT;

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL
in DRURY-LANE,

By His MAJESTY's Servants.

Written by Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

The Second Edition.

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PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mr. THEOPHILUS CIBBER.

THE Tragick Muſe, to merit wiſh'd Applauſe,
From fancy'd Miſery, real Caution draws;
Her flaming Strokes diſplay ſome purple Crime,
The Paſſions feel, and the Soul ſwells Sublime.
The Comick, all this Pomp of Woe declines,
Softens her Light, and rather ſmiles, than ſhines;
She but your known familiar Follies ſhews,
Prudes, Miſers, Cullies, Fops, Coquets and Beaus:
With her, as at ſome poor Man's Feaſt, you meet,
Where, what the Gueſts contribute, makes the Treat.

Criticks! be dumb to-night—no Skill diſplay;
A dangerous Woman-Poet *wrote the Play:*
One, who not fears your Fury, tho' prevailing,
More than your Match, in every thing, but Railing.
Give her fair Quarter, and whene'er ſhe tries ye,
Safe in ſuperior Spirit, *ſhe deſies ye:*
Meaſure her Force, by her known Novels, *writ*
With manly Vigour, and with Woman's Wit.
Then tremble, and depend, if ye beſet her,
She, who can talk ſo well, may act yet better.

Learn, from the opening Scene, ye blooming Fair,
Rightly to know your Worth, and match with Care;
When a Fool tempts ye, arm your Hearts with Pride,
And think th' Ungenerous born to be deny'd:
But, to the Worthy, and the Wiſe, be kind,
Their Cupid *is not, like the Vulgar's, blind:*
Juſtly they weigh your Charms, and ſweetly pay
Your ſoft Submiſſion, with permitted Sway.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Fairman.	Mr. *Boman.*
Mr. Graſpall.	Mr. *Evans.*
Sir Harry Beaumont.	Mr. *Wilks.*
Captain Gaylove.	Mr. *Bridgewater.*
Courtly.	Mr. *Oates,*
Toywell.	Mr. *Cibber.*
Sneaksby.	Mr. *Parker.*
Shamble.	Mr. *Harper.*
Tim.	Mr. *Peplow.*

WOMEN.

Widow Stately.	Mrs. *Willis.*
Mrs. Graſpall.	Mrs. *Haywood,* the Author.
Celemena.	Mrs. *Tenoe.*
Marilla.	Mrs. *Lindar.*
Amadea.	Mrs. *Brett.*
Dogood.	Mrs. *Daviſon.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter Captain Gaylove, Courtly, *and* Shamble.

Courtly. I Little thought, when I went out to take the Air this Morning, to be ſo agreeably ſurpriz'd with the ſight of my old Companion, and Friend—but I hope no Misfortune of yours has occaſion'd me this Happineſs, which I confeſs would be much more compleat, but for that Doubt.

Gaylove. While Fortune has a Being, we muſt all expect to find Viciſſitudes—but nothing of my own Affairs can take me up ſo much as to make me forgetful of my Friends——May I yet wiſh you Joy? Art marry'd? Or do you ſtill ſet *Hymen* at defiance?

Court. No, *Charles*, I am not yet ſo happy.

Gay. Happy! Is it poſſible you can term the Loſs of Liberty a Happineſs? you, who of all Mankind ſeem'd moſt averſe to it.

Court. My Eyes, at laſt, are open'd, *Charles*; and I now court thoſe Bonds as a Bleſſing, which I once look'd upon as galling Fetters.

Gay. Poor *Ned*——I pity thy Change——But pray who is the Lady whoſe Charms have wrought ſo wonderful a Transformation?

Court. I will not go about to deſcribe her, becauſe I am certain you'll look on her real Character as an extravagant Encomium;——but ſhe is the Niece of Mr. *Fairman*, whom you have often ſeen with me in *London*.

Gay. If I remember the Man, he's of a downright ſincere Temper, affable and obliging; but I believe loves Money.

Court. You read his Character——His Brother was a poſitive, haſty, old Gentleman, and conſider'd Money as the Source of all Happineſs——left an only Daughter, whom, on his Death-bed, he oblig'd to ſwear ſhe ſhould marry the Man he propos'd to her, (one who is, without exception, the greateſt Fop in nature, but has 3000 *l.* a Year, which was an irreſiſtible Motive to him:) You cannot but have ſeen him either at *London* or *Bath*, his Name is *Toywell*.

Gay. O! I know him perfectly.

Court. This Wretch, who has no Senſe of what is truly valuable, and eſteems *Marilla* only for her Fortune, makes me deſpair of Happineſs: for ſhe ſeems ſo religiouſly bent to keep her Vow, that all my Applications hitherto have been ineffectual to obtain any thing more from her than a bare Complaiſance.——But prithee, dear *Charles*, give me leave to be impertinent, and enquire what drove you to *Salisbury*?

Gay. Why faith, *Ned*, you know in what manner I us'd to live; the Conſequence of which was a certain Equipage of People call'd Duns, whoſe daily Attendance was no way pleaſing to me. In ſhort, my Creditors having no Patience, my Father no Compaſſion, and I no Money, I was oblig'd to leave *London* in complaiſance to my Tradeſmen—fearing I ſhould put them to the expence of providing a Lodging for one, who thought himſelf too far engag'd to 'em already——there-

therefore ſelling my Company in the Guards, I bought in one of theſe Regiments. But prithee, *Ned*, give me ſome little Idea how you ſpend your time here.

Court. As they do in moſt Country Towns—the Men in Hunting, Hawking, and Drinking—the Women in Cookery, Pickling, and Preſerving—not but there are ſome more elegant among us, to whom I ſhall make it my Buſineſs to introduce you.

Gay. I ſhall think my ſelf infinitely oblig'd to you.

Court. Of the Number of thoſe I laſt mention'd, is Sir *Harry Beaumont*; who, tho' he chuſes to live retir'd in this Country at preſent, where he has a vaſt Eſtate, has been a very great Traveller, and from all the different Courts where he has been, brought with him every thing worth the wearing of a fine Gentleman.—In ſhort, I know nothing of his Character that a Man of the ſtricteſt Honour would not be proud of—then for his Wit and Converſation, 'tis ſuch as I'm ſure you'll be infinitely charm'd with.

Gay. The Deſcription you give of him is no more than what he merits—I knew him about a Year ago; he then made his Addreſſes to a Relation of mine—I never heard what occaſion'd their breaking off—I thought him a moſt accompliſh'd Gentleman, and I am glad to hear his late Acceſſion to his Uncle's Title and Eſtate has not taken from him that eaſy Gayety and Freedom of Behaviour, which is one of the greateſt Charms of Converſation, and without which the brighteſt Wit wants reliſh.

Court. You ſhall anon renew your Acquaintance with him— he has engag'd me to dine with him to-day, your Company will add to the Pleaſure of the Entertainment, and in the Afternoon I will carry you to viſit ſome Ladies.

Gay. May I ask you who they are?

Court. I believe you never ſaw either of 'em—one is my Miſtreſs, the other is Daughter to Mr. *Fairman*, whoſe Name is *Celemena*:—She is ſpeedily to be marry'd to a very Blockhead, one *Sneaksby*—She is a Woman of a world of Life and Spirit in her Converſation, and has as much Wit as her intended Husband

wants it; I am certain you will be pleas'd with her Acquaintance.

Gay. I were ſtupid elſe, if ſhe be what you repreſent.——But, *Ned*, I have heard of a mighty fine Woman you have here, ſince my coming into theſe Parts, one who bears the Bell from all the reſt—I think they call her Mrs. *Graſpall.*

Court. She is extremely handſome indeed, and virtuous they ſay; but I never viſit there:—She is married to the moſt covetous miſerable Wretch that ever was; he denies her the Privilege of any Company, not out of Jealouſy, but for fear ſhe ſhou'd be at any Expence in entertaining 'em

Gay. And how does ſhe endure a Reſtraint ſo diſagreeable to her Youth and Beauty?

Court. With a Reſignation which is ſurprizing to all who know her:—But come, we'll take a little Walk, and then to Dinner.

Gay. With all my Heart. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Dogood, *and pulls* Shamble *back.*

Dogood. 'Tis he for certain!
Harkye! harkye! 'Squire *Sancho*, you have follow'd your Don *Quixote* long enough—to take upon you the Protection of a diſtreſſed Damſel——without any Infringement, I hope, on the hardy Knight—your Maſter.

Shamble. Faith, Lady, I know you not;—and if you have any Commands for me, I ſhall be more at leiſure, and in better humour after Dinner.

Do. Well, I find the Proverb's falſe, which ſays Cuſtom is a ſecond Nature—or the want of a Dinner would not put the accuſtom'd Mr. *Shamble* out of humour.

Sham. Ha! by my Veracity, *Jenny!*

Do. Ay, by my Maidenhead (as terrible an Oath) the very ſame; but I wonder thou could'ſt forget me in ſo ſhort a time.

Sham. Why how was it poſſible to know thee thus metamorphos'd! fine Lace Pinners tranſmogrify'd into a round ear'd Coif and a high-crown'd Hat—a Gold Watch

Watch into a Pincuſhion, and a Tweezer into a Sciſſar-Caſe—Prithee on what Deſign art thou thus equipt?

Do. Why, faith, *Shamble*—I found Trading in publick grew ſomewhat ſlippery, and now deal all in private.

Sham. What, kept?

Do. Not for the purpoſe you mean——In ſhort, being weary of the Life I led in *London*, I reſolv'd to take up, and live retir'd—I found means to be recommended to the Service of one of the richeſt Widows in this Country, with whom I now live as a Houſe-keeper—not but I have a great deal of ſpare Time for the ſervice of my Friends.

Sham. Ha! ſay'ſt thou ſo? Why then methinks 'tis greatly in thy power to oblige my Maſter——thy Aſſiſtance may be needful in a place where he has ſo little Acquaintance. The Company of a kind She would not be unwelcome to a Man of his Conſtitution——and as his Affairs ſtand at preſent, a rich Widow or Heireſs would be an excellent Cordial to his ſinking Fortune.

Do. O! I thought you would be glad to own me—Why my Miſtreſs is a Widow, and exceeding rich; but, duce on't, her Age and Affectation will never down with thy queaſy-ſtomach'd Maſter.

Sham. Prithee what, who is ſhe?

Do. The Relict of a Country Mercer, who, dying, left her an immenſe Sum of Money, beſides a good Eſtate he had purchas'd in Land——She has no Child, but a fooliſh Nephew is look'd upon as Heir——he is ſpeedily to be marry'd to a young Lady of a great Fortune, and a celebrated Beauty——I could wiſh thy Maſter were in his place, but that's impoſſible to be effected.

Sham. But has this old Lady of yours no Suiters?

Do. Yes, enow——but ſhe is all for a Title; a Man of her own Station ſhe looks upon as unworthy of her. As ſoon as this Marriage is over, ſhe deſigns to go to *London*, and lay out her whole Eſtate, rather than want a Bargain of Knight's Fleſh.

Sham. I have a Thought come into my Head, which

which may prove a lucky one———Doſt thou not think if I were equipt accordingly, I might paſs for a Knight?

Do. A Knight, ha! ha! ha!

Sham. Why, I have ſeen as bad a Face in a gilded Chariot.

Do. That's true; and now I think on't, 'tis not the Man, but the Title that muſt charm her——I don't know, but with my Management, ſuch a thing might be poſſible.

Sham. If it cou'd, 500 *l.* are thine out of her Money——beſides a Premium better than any Jointure I can make her.

Do. O Goodman Promiſer! as if I were not acquainted with your Abilities——make but the Money ſecure to me, and I'll give you a Diſcharge from all other Demands.

Sham. Well, but harkye, I ſuppoſe with your Change of Habit, you have alſo ſhifted your Name—by what muſt I call you now?

Do. Dogood, at your Service.

Sham. A very good Name, and I hope prophetick to us both—but come, ſhall we ſtep into ſome Houſe, and conſult about this Affair?

Do. Ay, I have an Acquaintance juſt by. [*Ex.*

Enter Mrs. Graſpall, *and* Amadea *in Boy's Cloaths.*

Wife. Very unaccountable——that neither at Home or Abroad, I can one Moment get rid of this little troubleſome Impertinent.———Have you any Buſineſs this way, Sir?

Amad. No other, Madam, than to wait on you; now the Camp's ſo near, 'tis unſafe for Ladies to walk alone.

Wife. I am much oblig'd to you——but I apprehend no Danger. I cannot harbour ſo ill an Opinion of the Gentlemen of the Army, as to imagine any of them wou'd offer an Affront to a Woman, who, I hope, looks not to deſerve it——and as for the Meaner Sort (Thanks to the good Diſcipline they are under) they are oblig'd to follow the Example of their Leaders.

Amad. Were it ſo, which yet I can't allow——there

is

is another Danger not leſs imminent, tho' perhaps more pleaſing than what I have mention'd.——A certain Gentleman who lives not far off, and very much frequents this Walk, carries a kind of Spell in his Eyes and Tongue, which has been fatal to many of your Sex.

Wife. Ay; pray who is that?

Amad. I fancy, Madam, after what I've ſaid, 'tis needleſs to repeat his Name——however, for your Satisfaction——

Wife. My Satisfaction! what means he?

Amad. Ha! ſhe bluſhes——then my Suſpicions are too juſt.——Yes, Madam, ſince you take pleaſure in the Sound! Sir *Harry Beaumont*.

Wife. Was ever ſuch an Inſolence——I take pleaſure in the Sound! What is Sir *Harry Beaumont* to me, or I to him?

Amad. Nay, if you are angry, Madam——

Wife. Have I not Reaſon? What Act of mine has ever juſtify'd this Rudeneſs——but I gueſs by whom you are ſet on; and if it were not more Love of myſelf, than my Husband, I wou'd be reveng'd even in the way he fears.

Amad. Nay, now I underſtand you not——but if you think your Husband——

Wife. Yes, I know you wou'd not dare, unleſs authoriz'd by him, to treat me in this manner—Ungrateful Man! have I ſubmitted to the hard uncovcted Condition of his Wife, to be at laſt ſuſpected of Diſhonour—O! to what Fate are wretched Women born! Condemn'd to Slavery, tho' conſcious of ſuperior Merit, and bound to obey the ſevere Dictates of a very Fool, when e'er the Name of Husband gives 'em Force.

Amad. Tranſport not thus your ſelf with cauſeleſs Rage, but liſten patiently, while I confeſs I am alone the Offender——your Virtue appears fair, your Conduct blameleſs, to the fond Eyes of your admiring Husband——but the judging World, which takes delight in finding ſomething to condemn, watch all your Actions; and as I ſo freely have begun, I will take the liberty ſtill to remind you, that the frequent Viſits of Sir *Harry Beaumont* are moſt pernicious to your Character.——

Wife.

Wife. 'Tis well—then this is your Surmiſe.

Amad. If mine, why not others?

Wife. No, bold Adviſer——my Reputation is too well eſtabliſh'd—no Malice ever attempted to ſully my unblemiſh'd Fame, till thou, for what baſe End I know not, haſt preſum'd to tax me—but I deſpiſe whatever thou can'ſt ſay, and ſecure in my own Innocence, defy thy Malice.

Amad. But one word more——if to receive the Addreſſes of a Man, whoſe utmoſt Wit can find no Form to make 'em look like honourable—and varniſh o'er the vile Deſign they are made for; if this, I ſay, be not a Fault to Vertue, I have done.

Wife. Oh Heavens!

Amad. If you are free from this, then I confeſs my Accuſation falſe——but if charm'd with Flattery, your Sex's Bait to ruin, you ſtill encourage the Deceiver's Hopes, you wrong your ſelf, not I. I leave you to reflect on what I've ſaid; and, as you want not Senſe, intreat you to exert it on an Occaſion which requires it all——think, 'tis your good Genius warns thro' my Lips, immortal Honour, Fame, and Peace, attend to crown the glorious Conqueſt——Eternal Infamy, Diſgrace, and thoſe worſe Racks the Stings of Conſcience, watch to ſeize your Soul, if you perſiſt to liſten to the undoing Vows of faithleſs *Beaumont*.——Madam, farewel, and reſt aſſur'd, whatever my Thoughts are, my Tongue, but to yourſelf, ſhall on this Theme be dumb for ever. [*Exit.*

Wife. His Words, methinks, have open'd all my Heart, and fill'd it with a Horror, till now a Stranger to me——O Vertue! if I in ought had ſwerv'd from thy ſtrict Precepts, I ſhou'd not wonder at theſe Starts, and Tremblings———but as I have held, and ſtill will hold my Honour dearer than my Life, why am I thus alarm'd? Why, arm'd with Innocence, did I not hear, unmov'd, the audacious Monitor? O 'tis too true, I've been to blame: tho' reſolute never to yield to what the Tempter ſues for, I have, perhaps, with too attentive Ears, liſtned to his Perſuaſions——and 'tis a Crime to Vertue,

Vertue, ev'n but to hear what looſe Deſires ſuggeſt—were I unmarried——cou'd I with Honour receive Sir *Harry*'s Love, how happy were my Lot?—For ſure, of all Mankind, he is moſt form'd to charm, and bleſs a Woman's fondeſt, ſofteſt Wiſhes—but as I am, tho' hard my Fate, I muſt be blind and deaf to all his Worth, and place my ſole Felicity in Duty.——That Creature here!

Enter Toywell.

Toy. She's here, and alone——now will I accoſt her with ſuch Phraſes, as ſhe ſhall not be able to withſtand.——Stay, Madam, fly not your adoring Slave——who long has languiſh'd for this Opportunity, to tell you that he dies for you.

Wife. What means the Wretch? are you mad, Sir?

Toy. If Love be Madneſs, I have wondrous Cauſe—for from the firſt Moment I beheld that Field of Beauty, I have done nothing but wiſh and languiſh, burn and bleed, with Paſſion and Deſire.

Wife. Hold, Sir; if you really are in your Senſes, let me tell you, you are guilty of an Aſſurance, which you will not find me eaſy to forgive.

Toy. No matter for that, I know ſhe's pleas'd with it——Ah, Madam! as the inimitable *Otway* ſays, Who can behold ſuch Beauty, and be ſilent?

Wife. Wretched Animal——If I did not think that all Advice was loſt upon you, I wou'd give you this friendly Caution—to know to whom you ſpeak.

Toy. Ha! Perhaps I've been too grave—Gad, I'll try another way. [*aſide*]——Why, Faith, Madam, I believe I know you, and I am ſure I know myſelf——there ſtand you, Mrs. *Suſanna Graſpall*———without Exception, the moſt agreeable Woman breathing—married to an old decrepid, miſerly Curmudgeon——who debars you from all the Pleaſures of Life; and here am I, *Jack Toywell*, in free Poſſeſſion of full three thouſand Pounds a Year—with Youth, Vigour, and ſome other tolerable Qualifications, ready with my Perſon and Fortune to make you happy in all thoſe Enjoyments your Husband's Age and Avarice denies.—Gad, I am mighty florid to-day.

Wife.

Wife. Since you oblige me to be more ſerious than I thought at firſt your ridiculous Addreſſes merited, I muſt tell you, that you are an impudent pretending Fop——that I deſpiſe and loath you; and if you dare to trouble me again with ſuch impertinent Diſcourſes, my Husband ſhall be acquainted with the Character you give of him.

Toy. Come, Madam, egad I like you ne'er the worſe for this diſſembled Coldneſs——it whets the Edge of Appetite, and gives a double Reliſh to thoſe Raptures you yielding will beſtow.

Wife. Nay, if you grow rude———

Toy. No Rudeneſs, Madam, but what you will one Day pardon:———A Lover muſt begin with humble diſtant Sighs, but when the Ice is broke, and he has once ventur'd to ſay he loves, then he proceeds by ſwift Degrees to greater Freedoms—your Hand, your Lips.——— [*Offers to kiſs her.*

Wife. Impudent Villain. [*boxes his Ears.*] But here's Company—if ever thou dar'ſt affront me thus again.

Enter Beaumont.

Beau. Ha! ſo free!

Toy. Sir *Harry Beaumont*——dear Sir *Harry*, I am your moſt obſequious humble Servant.

Beau. Yours, yours, Mr. *Toywell*——a good Day to you, Madam, I ſee you are taking the Benefit of the freſh Air this Morning—I doubt not but you have been agreeably entertain'd in the Converſation of ſo polite a Gentleman as Mr. *Toywell*.

Wife. I ſhall not envy you that Happineſs, Sir *Harry*, therefore leave you to enjoy it———your Servant! Oh the Difference of Men! [*Ex.*

Beau. Madam, your moſt humble———methinks, Mr. *Toywell*, the Lady ſeems diſpleas'd——what have you done to her?

Toy. O Sir *Harry*, you and I know the World too well, to think a Woman's Anger, in ſome Caſes, worth regarding: I dare ſwear it has eſcaped the Obſervation of neither of us, that they are frequently moſt pleas'd, when leaſt they ſeem to be ſo.———

Beau.

Beau. What! then you have been making Love.

Toy. Why, Faith, she is look'd upon as one of the finest Women in the County—and having had of late a pretty deal of idle time on my hands, I took it into my head to make her some Offers, which, I believe, when she has consider'd on, she'll scarce refuse.

Beau. Conceited Coxcomb! but she has the Reputation of a vertuous Woman.——

Toy. Vertuous! so they are all till they are try'd—and I don't remember to have heard, that before me, any Man of Figure has attack'd her——

Beau. Intolerable Fop!——A Man truly deserving of a Lady's Favour, Mr. *Toywell*, seldom discloses his Design on the Woman he admires, but to herself—for any thing you know, Mrs. *Graspall* may have been Proof against the most elegant Addresses.

Toy. 'Twas then for want of a right Method in applying them——for my part, I never yet had the Mortification to engage with any Woman, silly enough to hold out above three Summons.——

Beau. You are a happy Man indeed——but methinks 'tis a little odd you dare venture to make an Attempt of this Nature so near your Marriage—for I hear your Wedding with the fair *Mirilla* is to be accomplish'd in a Day or two—Suppose she shou'd hear of it.

Toy. Psha! 'tis so long ago since we were contracted, that for a great while we have regarded each other with an absolute Indifference.——I lik'd her well enough indeed at first, but the Certainty that she must one day be my Wife, has set her in the self-same View as she wou'd have appear'd after seven Years Possession. But now I think on't, I promis'd her Uncle to dine with 'em to-day——prithee, Sir *Harry*, go along with me, I shall be so dull else.

Beau. I wou'd willingly accompany you, Mr. *Toywell*, to such agreeable Conversation, if I were not engag'd at home with some Friends, who I believe by this time expect me.

Toy. Phoo, Pox——well then I must take my leave; 'tis pretty near One, and they dine consumed early.—Sir *Harry*, your Servant. [*Exit.*

Beau.

Beau. Your Servant, Sir.——Fool! Heavens, how ſtrange a Creature is a Lover!———I am aſham'd to think the Rivalſhip of ſuch a Wretch can give me Pain, and yet it does—which proves more ſtrongly than I e'er knew before, the Violence of my Paſſion——Yes, I find I love to ſuch a height, that if unlicens'd Enjoyment be a Crime, 'tis here excus'd by the Neceſſity—but be it as it will, wou'd I promiſe it myſelf at any rate——but Hope is not in vain; yet ſhe has heard my Suit, and ſtill continues to admit my Viſits—confeſſes an Eſteem, and if ſo, 'tis the firſt Step to Love——— A conſtant Aſſiduity, in time, perhaps may looſen the ſtrict Bonds of galling Duty, and make the Charmer mine.

Ne'er let the Lover of his Wiſh deſpair,
Whoſe Vows of Paſſion reach th'attentive Fair:
Tho' bent to follow Vertue, 'tis her Fate
At laſt to yield, if once capitulate.

End of the Firſt Act.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Celemena *and* Marilla.

Cel. PRITHEE, good Couſin, take a Friend's Advice, and caſt off this obſtinate Humour of marrying the Man who ſlights you, and ſlighting the Man who loves you. *Toywell* has indeed a great Eſtate, but *Courtly* knows how to uſe what he has handſomely, and is withall very eaſy in his Circumſtances.——Can any thing, that has not taken an entire leave of her Underſtanding, perſiſt in a Reſolution of throwing herſelf away in this manner? *Mar.*

Mar. Allowing all that you have ſaid—the religious Obſervance I owe to the Vow I made my dying Father, leaves me no choice.

Cel. If the Dead cou'd tell what we living are doing, I am apt to believe the old Gentleman wou'd quit his Grave a while, to forbid the Banes, and ſave his Daughter from ſo viſible a Ruin.—Beſides, the Vow you made was forc'd, and conſequently not binding——Heavens! it provokes me to ſee you act ſo contrary to Reaſon, nay, to your own Inclination too; for I am ſure you love *Courtly*.

Mar. How came you ſo well acquainted with my Thoughts, good Couſin?

Cel. Prithee, none of your Airs! I know you have ſenſe enough to diſtinguiſh a Man of Parts from a Fool.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Ladies, Mr. *Courtly* and a ſtrange Gentleman deſire to know if you are at leiſure.

Cel. Show 'em up. [*Exit Servant.*] Now let me ſee you uſe him as you us'd to do, and I proteſt I'll diſclaim Kindred with you.

Mar. You will——but I fancy I ſhall put it to the venture.

Cel. I wonder who he has brought with him.

Enter Courtly *and* Gaylove.

Court. Ladies, I hope you will pardon my introducing a Gentleman whoſe Converſation will hereafter make his own Apology.——This, Captain, is Mr. *Fairman*'s Daughter; this, his Niece.

Cel. We are too well acquainted with Mr. *Courtly*'s Delicacy, not to afford a ready Welcome to any whom he calls Friend. Such Entertainment, Sir, as furniſhes a homely Country Cottage, you may expect.

Gay. He muſt be covetuous indeed, could form a Wiſh beyond what here is to be found.

Cel. This Fellow has ſomething in him prodigiouſly agreeable. I can't help liking him.——[*Aſide.*] Well, Mr.

Mr. *Courtly*, I have been labouring for you, you muſt now e'en ſpeak for yourſelf.

Court. If all that can betoken a ſincere and ardent Paſſion, cou'd influence the fair *Marilla* to pity what I feel, ſhe would not thus cruelly reſolve to make my Rival happy.

Mar. If you have any Value for my Quiet, you will forbear to urge a Suit, which, were my Inclination otherwiſe, is not in my power to grant; and conſider me not as Miſtreſs of myſelf.

Court. Shou'd the Man you purpoſe to bleſs, not know the Value of the Treaſure you beſtow, I do aſſure you, Madam, 'twou'd give me an Uneaſineſs almoſt equal to the Loſs of you.

Mar. That's generous indeed, but—

Court. Yet give me leave—Your Pardon, Madam! [to *Cel.*] [*They walk apart.*]

Cel. O Sir, you will have it, if your Friend will as willingly forgive your leaving him to the Converſation of a raw Country Girl.

Gay. Now have I a great mind to tell you the pleaſure he does me, but fear of diſobliging ſtops my Mouth:

But Eccho ſhall ſo oft repeat your Name,
You'll learn my Sufferings, and reward my Flame.

As my Paſſion is more than common, my Style, Madam, ought to be no leſs than Heroick.

Cel. But had I an inclination to give ear to it, you have more Modeſty, I hope, than to make love at firſt ſight———But now I think on't, perhaps you may imagine, that the Apprehenſion of the fine things may be ſaying yonder, makes me wiſh I were capable of inſpiring the ſame; however, to ſhew you I have vanity enough to believe I've made a Conqueſt, when I have found the Bark of every Tree carv'd with the cruel *Celemene*'s Name, and you have ſigh'd away ſome ſeven Years———

Gay. I find, Madam, you're like to be pretty reaſonable.

Cel.

Col. When Cooing Doves the ſhady Cypreſs ſhun,
And hide their Heads, to find their Plaints outdone;
When ſympathizing Grief o'erſpreads the Plains,
And Shepherds mourn your Fate in rural Strains;
When my Diſdain's the Theme of every Song,
And Celemena *hangs on every Tongue*——

Gay. For Heaven's ſake, Madam! have you no Compaſſion?

Col. When cruel Nymph through Hills and Vallies flies,
And diſtant Eccho cruel Nymph *replies*——

Gay. Dear Madam, come to a Concluſion.

Col. I have done—and here give you permiſſion to ſpend the following ſeven Years in the ſame manner; then come to me again, and I perhaps may allow you my Hand to—Kiſs.

Gay. Truly, Madam, I can't but ſay your Demands are extremely moderate——But can't you as well ſuppoſe all this paſt? ——I have lov'd you very paſſionately theſe ſeven Minutes, and, according to Modern Calculation, they appear ſo many Ages.

Col. No, I can't ſuppoſe one word on't——nor can I admit of your Modern Calculations——'tis impoſſible the Man can love me, who would heſitate on ſtarving, hanging or drowning on my account—much leſs in paſſing a few Years in ſo ſublime a Deſpair, as I have enjoin'd you———

Gay. But, Madam——

Col. A word more——and I'll not allow of you as a Servant, till you have kill'd Lions, and made Monſters tame.

Gay. There's no talking to her—ſhe will be too hard for me. O! here comes a Relief.

Enter Fairman *and* Toywell.

Toy. So, Ladies and Gentlemen, Wit and Beauty are inſeparable here, and, let me blood, I am ſo pleaſant myſelf, I am like a Fiſh out of Water, in dull Company.

Fair. O' my Conſcience, this Nephew of mine that is to be, grows every day a greater Fop than ever. Your Servant, Gentlemen. Daughter, pray invite this good

good Company to your Wedding.——I expect 'Squire *Sneaksby* to-night, and to-morrow ſhall make you one.

Cel. Heaven forbid——'Tis very ſudden, Sir.

Fair. His Aunt, Child, the Widow *Stately*, is a fickle Woman; if ſhe happen to marry again, or ſhould change her mind, there is not ſuch another Match in the County———You don't conſider, ſhe is to ſettle beſt part of her Eſtate on him: and the Fortune I'll give you, will ſet you on a foot with the Nobility——

Mar. Now, *Celemena*, 'twill be my turn to wonder how you can ſubmit to be the Wife of a Fool.——But, Uncle, this *Sneaksby* is accounted exceeding ſilly.

Fair. He is good-natur'd, Niece, and rich; two things a young Woman ought to prefer to a full Head and light Purſe.

Toy. Nay, Sir, you would not marry my Cuz to a Fool——Why, Sir, ſhe'll never enjoy a happy Minute with a Fool——

Fair. Hum! then you think a Fool can never make a good Husband.

Toy. Certainly.

Fair. Ha! then if you have any Value for the Fair-Sex, ſhew it, by laying aſide all Thoughts of marrying.

Toy. The old Gentleman is mighty Teſty, methinks.

Fair. Well, *Celemena*, I expect your Compliance.

Cel. Sir, my Duty obliges me not to diſpute with your Commands——But I may find ſome way to evade 'em. [*Aſide.*

Fair. That's my good Girl, and to-morrow thou ſhalt have my Bleſſing in a Bag of ten thouſand Pounds——But come, I have ſome Buſineſs with you; your Servant all. [*Ex.*

Toy. Marilla.

Mar. Sir!

Toy. Prithee, my Dear, e'en let our Wedding be to-morrow.

Mar. Sir, you know my Obedience to my Father ſubmits my Will to yours.

Toy.

Toy. To-morrow then, if you pleaſe; 'twill ſave Expences.

Court. Heaven! that ſhe can bear this Uſage——Dear Madam, have ſome compaſſion for your-ſelf, if you have none for me.

Gay. Pardon a Stranger's Freedom, Madam, if I ſay, not only my Concern for my Friend, but alſo the ſincere Eſteem your Character has fill'd me with, makes me wiſh you could avoid this Marriage.

Mar. I thank you, Sir——but alas! you ſpeak the Charms of Liberty to a Galley-Slave.

Gay. But ſuppoſe ſome lucky Means ſhould offer, would you then bleſs my Friend?

Mar. There is not a Poſſibility, unleſs the Dead could be reſtor'd to Life, and give me back my Vow—but if there were, I'd promiſe nothing.

Court. I do not ask it—May your Fate be happy—my own I leave to your Diſpoſe.

Mar. 'Tis kindly ſaid—and I, perhaps ſhould not be found ungrateful———But I'll order Tea, you'll follow.

Court. Immediately, Madam. I fancy, *Charles*, this a good time for our Deſign.

Gay. Ay, ay, let me alone——Poor Lady, I pity her.

Court. So do I, for he had all her Fortune in his hands———But I am ſtrangely ſurpriz'd; he was reckon'd one of the moſt ſubſtantial Men in *London*: I fear his breaking will involve more than *Marilla* in his Ruin.

Toy. Ha! what's that? Pray, Sir, who is the Gentleman you ſpeak of?

Gay. Mr. *Truſty*, Sir, a Banker in *Lombard-ſtreet*.

Toy. Ha! Mr. *Truſty!*

Gay. Yes, Sir; a Statute was taken out againſt him two days before I left *London*——But you ſeem concern'd, Sir; I hope it will prove of no Prejudice to you.

Toy. Me! hum! no, Sir—I had no Dealings with him, but I know the beſt part, if not all of *Marilla*'s Fortune was lodg'd in his hands——I muſt find ſome way to

to break with her—This was lucky News, a Day more, and it had been as unfortunate. Gentlemen, your Servant. [*Exit.*

Gay. Come, chear up, *Ned*, who knows how this may work?

Court. His mercenary base Nature gives me some hopes.

Gay. If we could as easily contrive some Stratagem to defer *Celemena*'s Wedding; for I confess I feel something here that will give me disquiet to see her marry'd to another.

Court. How! *Charles*, I thought you were proof against Love and Matrimony.

Gay. Why, will you allow nobody to repent of their Mistakes but yourself?—*Celemena* has Wit, Beauty, and Good-nature—and I heard her Father express himself very prettily to her—10000 *l.* would make a Convert of one more Reprobate than your humble Servant.

Court. 'Tis a receiv'd Article indeed—but let's in, the Ladies wait.

Gay. Allons. [*Ex.*

Mrs. Graspall *discover'd reading at a Toylet.*

Wife. How small a Relief can Books afford us when the Mind's perplex'd?—The Subject that our Thoughts are bent upon, forms Characters more capital and swelling, than any these useless Pages can produce—and 'tis no matter on what Theme the Author treats; we read it our own way, and see but with our Passions Eyes—*Beaumont* is here in ev'ry Line—*Beaumont* in all the Volume—I'll look no more on't—These Opticks too are Traytors, and conspire with Fancy to undo me—To what shall I have recourse?

Enter Beaumont.

Beau. The Door happening to be open, and nobody in the way, I presum'd to enter without Ceremony.

Wife. Ha! catch'd in this Confusion of my Soul! when all my Thoughts were unprepar'd and hurry'd! Unlucky Accident!

Beau.

Beau. You are diſorder'd, Madam——I hope my Preſence has not offended.—

Wife. Sir *Harry*, you can be guilty of but one Offence—forbear to talk of Love, and you ſhall ever be moſt welcome here.

Beau. O too ſevere Injunction! you know this is the only Command I could refuſe to obey you in——and yet, unkind and cruel, you rate the Price of my Admittance at an Impoſſibility. The Language of my Eyes you have long ſince underſtood and pardon'd, why then is it greater Guilt when told you by my Tongue?

Wife. The Crime in both is equal——and ſince with Innocence I can admit of neither, have reſolv'd——

Beau. On what?

Wife. Never to look on you, or hear you more.

Beau. What have I done to merit ſuch a Sentence?

Wife. How ſhall I anſwer him, or how diſguiſe the real Reaſon of my Change of Temper, for much I fear, he will not think it Hate?—That I no ſooner did forbid your Viſits, was becauſe I hoped you would endeavour to overcome a Paſſion which, I think, I never err'd ſo far by any Words or Actions to encourage——and wiſh'd I might with Honour have preſerv'd your Friendſhip.

Beau. Are Love and Friendſhip then at ſuch a diſtance they ne'er can meet? O! wou'd you but rightly weigh their Likeneſs, you'd find the Scale ſo even; you'd think them Twins——Friendſhip is Love refin'd, and Love is Friendſhip of a warmer Soil——There's ſuch a Sympathy between 'em, the Breaſt that harbours one, can never be a Stranger to the other.——

Wife. I muſt not hearken to ſuch Sophiſtry——Hark! I think I hear ſomebody coming, and have reaſon to believe that of late I have had Spies upon my Actions——Step into the Cloſet, while I ſee who 'tis.— [*Exit* Beaum.

Enter Toywell.

Toywell! what means this Intruſion? Did I not bid

you trouble me no more? Or if I had not, were there no Servants in the way to keep down such Impertinents?

Toy. No, faith, Madam, all your People are in the middle of the Street yonder, crowding about a Pedlar's Pack——and chusing Nick-nacks; and so, Madam, Passage being free, I took an opportunity to, to, to—come in, Madam.———

Wife. Very well—but I shall call 'em to guard it better, and shew you down a nearer way than you came up, unless you leave me immediately.

Toy. I don't think you have so little Understanding—Besides, I am come to make a new Proposal——I have heard some News, which will certainly disappoint *Marilla* in her hopes of marrying me——I can now settle a whole Heart upon you.

Wife. Peace, thou despicable Fop——if you fancy this Gallantry, as 'tis possible you may be weak enough——I pity your Simplicity——But if your Designs are as base as your impudent persisting in this Behaviour intimates, once more I tell you, I have Vertue to arm me against the Assaults of your whole Sex, and Value enough for my Husband, to let him know the Favour you would do him—Who's there?

Toy. Nay, Madam, if I part with you so, you may justly suspect my want of Parts———Women often pardon Actions when they will not Words: a little Compulsion gives 'em an Excuse.——Come, come, you will not be always cruel.

Wife. Unhand me, Villain——help——

Toy. Nay, nay, I can stop your Mouth——[*As they struggle, she falls against the Closet-Door, which opens, and discovers* Beaumont.] 'Sdeath, Sir *Harry Beaumont!* why who the Devil thought to find you here? I beg ten thousand Pardons, if I have been the Cause of your Imprisonment—Let me blood, I must banter him a little——he dares not resent it, for fear I should tell.

Wife. O!. I'm undone—my Reputation's ruin'd! For Heaven's sake, Sir *Harry*, how came you there?

Toy. I suppose, Madam, Sir *Harry* offer'd this as a Piece of Gallantry; but I hope your Goodness will pardon

pardon him, for all the vain Attempts he may make on a Vertue ſo impregnable as yours——ha! ha! ha!

Beau. Give over your ridiculous Mirth, or——

Toy. Fye, fye, Sir *Harry*, that's no proper Weapon to be us'd in a Lady's Chamber——But, Sir *Harry*, you forget the Lady deſir'd you to tell her how you came hither.

Beau. Madam, I heartily beg pardon for the Surprize I have occaſion'd you——but having ſome Buſineſs with Mr. *Graſpall*, and finding nobody at home, I took the freedom to ſtep into the Cloſet, which I knew to be well furniſh'd with Books——deſigning no more than to amuſe myſelf till he came home——I happen'd to meet with one which ſo agreeably entertain'd me, that till the opening of the Door, I had forgot where I was.

Toy. Hum! Mr. *Graſpall* has indeed an admirable Collection——but Age has ſomewhat impair'd his Eyeſight; poor Man! I believe he ſeldom reads——And I muſt own 'tis a great Conveniency for a Gentleman, who has not Books of his own, to have the Liberty of ſo fine a Library.

Beau. Sir, I wiſh you either cou'd, or wou'd explain yourſelf——But if you harbour a Thought to the Prejudice of this Lady's Character, cou'd I diſcover it, I'd make ſuch an Example of you, as ſhould be a Terror to all talkative Coxcombs.

Toy. Who I, Sir *Harry*?

Wife. The Aſperſions of this Fool are intolerable——tho' my Innocence ſhould make me deſpiſe his Malice, and my Character not fear it; yet thoſe of his own Stamp may believe the mean Reflections he may caſt on me.

Toy. You ſee, Madam, what Inconveniencies attend Ill-nature; when you are kind, I'll——

Wife. Peace, Screech-Owl—— [*Exit.*

Beau. Come, Sir, the Lady is now gone; and ſince I am the unhappy Cauſe of her Uneaſineſs, it lies upon me to vindicate her Reputation——A Fool's moſt dangerous Weapon is his Tongue, and I find there is no way to ſtop yours, but by cutting it out——Draw, Sir.

Toy. I don't like his Looks——Gad, I wiſh I had not been ſo witty——Draw, Sir *Harry!* why I hope you are not in earneſt——What draw on your Friend for a little harmleſs Rallery?——if you have no more value for me, I'll ſhew you I love you better.——

Beau. That ſhan't do, Sir.

Toy. Why, Sir *Harry*, I was but in jeſt, as I hope to live——I vow to Gad I believe the Lady as chaſte as the Moon, and her Vertue as conſpicuous as the Stars in the Firmament——Draw quoth'a! What draw upon my Friend——Sir *Harry Beaumont!*—All the World ſhan't make me draw upon my Friend.

Beau. Harkye, Sir, your Cowardice ſhan't skreen you another time——if ever I hear a word injurious of this Lady, aſſure yourſelf I ſhall juſtify her Honour with my Life. [*Ex.*

Toy. Pox! who would have thought he had lov'd fighting ſo well?——I'm glad I'm well off tho'——I'll trouble myſelf no more about her—there are as fine Women to be had without venturing one's Life for 'em. Now if I could but find ſome plauſible Pretence to break with *Marilla*, I ſhould be the moſt eaſy Man in the World; for

When her Fortune's gone, the loveliest Woman
In this wiſe Age is a fit Wife for no Man.

The End of the Second Act.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Captain Gaylove, Courtly *laughing, and* Shamble *very fine.*

Gay. HA! ha! ha! how ſawcy the Rogue looks?

Court. Why he tells you his Grandeur muſt charm the Widow.

Sham. Ha! ha! I have quite forgot my Dancing for want of Practice—but Buſineſs, State-Affairs, Intrigues, and one Hurry or another takes up all my Time—Ha! ha! Pray Gentlemen ſtand by—Do you know who I am? Won't this do, Sir? [*In an affected Tone.*

Court. Rarely! [*Dancing in an awkward manner.*

Gay. Excellent! if he can but keep up to his Character.

Sham. O! Sir, there is no one thing in the World ſo ſoon learnt as the forgetting what one really is, in the Appearance of another—Humility is a Leſſon few ſtudy with much Pleaſure, and all, at ſome times, are truant from. Then why may not I, Sir *Triſtram Shamtown*, forget I have been your Honour's Pimp, and Serving-Man?

Court. Sir *Triſtram.*

Gay. Aye, that Name was of my inventing. But pray, good Sir *Triſtram*, don't ſo far forget your ſelf, as to neglect the main Chance—take Care to put the Widow off ſettling any Part of her Eſtate on her Nephew.

Sham. No, no, Sir, never doubt it. I ſhall retain that Principle of Honour, to ſerve my Friends, when

in ſo doing I doubly ſerve myſelf———If I marry the Widow, depend upon it, not a Foot of the Eſtate ſhall be parted with——In that I go a great way in breaking off the deſigned Match between her Nephew and *Celemena*.

Court. A great way—all in all! for I am ſatisfy'd Mr. *Fairman* will never ſacrifice his Daughter to ſuch a Fool as *Sneaksby*, without a Certainty of the Widow's Land for her Jointure.

Gay. Well, faith, I have a ſtrong Opinion we ſhall ſucceed—prithee *Shamble*, tell honeſt *Jenny*, Mrs. *Dogood* I think you call her now, that if ſhe has not quite forgot paſt Kindneſſes, ſhe muſt lend her Aſſiſtance in this Affair; and to refreſh her Memory, let her know 500 Pieces more are at her Service, the Moment *Sneaksby* quits his Pretenſions to *Celemena*.

Sham. I'll warrant you, Sir—but 'tis about the time ſhe order'd me to come.

Gay. Come, ſhall we walk? Mr. *Fairman*, you know, was ſo obliging to deſire we'd paſs the Evening there.

Court. With all my Heart—tho' it is feeding me with the Fare of *Tantalus*——I ought to ſhun the Sight of what I muſt deſire, and yet am hopeleſs of enjoying.

Gay. Never deſpair, our Deſign on *Toywell* may have more effect than you imagine.——Farewell *Shamble*, good Luck attend thee——if any thing happens, I ſhall be here, or at Mr. *Fairman*'s. [*Ex*.

Sham. I have a good Stock of Impudence, and that often carries the Day.

And they went to a Widow's Houſe,
And ſhe was dancing naked,
And all the Tunes the Piper play'd,
Was take it, Widow, take it. [Exit.

Enter Sneaksby *and* Tim.

Sneak. Come, *Tim*, let's go cloſe together—I can't abide to be out when it grows towards dark, now here be all theſe Soldiers come down—they are plaguy miſchievous, they ſay——— *Tim*.

Tim. Ay, Sir, my Mother us'd to tell me terrible Stories of 'em.

Sneak. 'Twan't well done of Aunt, ſo 'twan't, to turn one out as ſoon as ever one come——She might have made one eat a bit of ſomewhat firſt, methinks—what did I care if I did not ſee my Miſtreſs till to-morrow, we an't to be marry'd to-night.

Tim. Mayhap, Sir, ſhe thought 'twou'd not look reſpectful enough.———

Sneak. What did I care, I have paid reſpect to her long enough, I think—beſides, is not ſhe a going to be my Wife? and as long as we know one another's Mind, what ſignifies making ſuch a to-do about it?

Tim. Why, Sir, you told me you had never ask'd her the Queſtion yet.

Sneak. What then? Aunt has, and Father-in-law that muſt be, and that's as well—Oh here he comes.—

Enter Fairman.

Fair. Your Servant, Father-in-law—Mr. *Sneaksby*, your Servant—how happens it your Aunt is not with you——I expected her.—

Sneak. Why, Aunt gives her Service—but ſhe has ſome great Viſiter to come to-night belike, for all the Houſe is ſtuck with Candles, and ſhe is woundy fine.

Fair. An humble Servant, it may be.

Sneak. Mayhap ſo, I never ask Quekions.

Fair. I wiſh I had the Writings ſeal'd tho'. [*Aſide.*

Sneak. 'Tis nothing to me, you know ſhe has promis'd me the Eſtate.

Fair. If ſhe ſhould marry, I much queſtion whether ſhe'll keep her word——I muſt be ſatisfy'd. [*Aſide.*] But come, Sir, let's go in, my Daughter expects you.

Sneak. Ay, Father-in-law—but I wiſh you'd let me have a bit of ſomewhat firſt, for *Tim* and I are plaguy hungry, and Aunt wou'd not let us ſtay to eat a bit.

Fair. You ſhall command any thing my Houſe affords. [*Ex.*

Enter Dogood *and* Shamble.

Do. Well, now I think 'tis almoſt impoſſible our

Plot ſhou'd fail——the Widow is half diſtracted in Love with you, before ſhe ſees you.

Sham. My Perſon cannot but ſecure the Conqueſt.

Do. You wou'd have laugh'd if you had ſeen how greedily ſhe ſwallow'd the Bait——but you muſt be ſure to ſtrut and look big, and not loſe an Inch of your Grandeur——

Sham. O, you need not fear——none look ſo proud and ſcornful as your new-made Gentry.

Do. I have told her, I waited on a Siſter of yours in *London*; that you have a good Eſtate in Poſſeſſion, and another in Reverſion; that you are of a moſt ancient Family.——

Sham. And my Name is——

Do. Sir *Triſtram Shamtown*——of *Shamtown-Hall*——but I hear her coming, ſtep into the next Room, and you ſhall hear a little of her Humour. [*Exit* Sham.

Enter Widow.

Wid. And did Sir *Triſtram* tell you he'd be ſure to come?

Do. I warrant you, Madam, he'll not fail; for tho' I ſay it, he had always a great Reſpect for me.

Wid. I long to ſee him——how do I look, *Dogood*?

Do. Perfectly amiable, Madam.

Wid. I think I am bloated to-day——[*Pulls out a Pocket-Glaſs.*] Here, pull this Ribband a little more to my Face——ſo, there, 'tis well enough now——well, I don't like myſelf, 'tis impoſſible a Man of his Quality ſhou'd take a fancy to me.

Do. 'Tis rather impoſſible he ſhou'd not, Madam. But hark, ſomebody knocks——'tis he for certain.

Wid. Well, I vow, I believe ſomething will come of this, for I never had ſuch a Palpitation ſince the Day I firſt ſaw Mr. *Stately*.

Enter Servant.

Serv. A Gentleman enquires for Mrs. *Dogood*; he told me his Name, but 'tis ſo hard a one, I have forgot it.

Wid. It muſt be he——this Blockhead is us'd to nothing but

but the Vulgar—but if he continues with me, he muſt improve his Underſtanding.

Do. Deſire the Gentleman to walk up.

Wid. And do you hear, Loggerhead, be ſure you pay him a great deal of Reſpect. [*Ex. Servant.*] I leave thee to receive him—I'll ſtep into the next Room, and ſettle my ſelf a little, and then return as if I did not know any body was here.—

Do. Very well, Madam—and in the mean time I'll be giving him a Character.

Wid. That's my good Wench—and I'll reward thee. [*Exit.*

Do. They ſay good Actions reward themſelves—but if my Project goes on as luckily as it begins, I am like to have Rewards from all Sides.

Enter Shamble.

So, you have nothing to do, you ſee, but to ſummon the Governour, the Fort's ready to ſurrender.

Sham. Egad, and I like the Situation of it extremely, it ſeems to want no Fortification.

Do. You ſee but the Outworks, there's a Magazine within, of Plate, and Jewels, and old Broad-pieces, that have not ſeen the Sun theſe forty Years, enough to ſet the whole Country in a Blaze—But I hear her coming—now to your Part.

Sham. Ay, ay,—And your Lady is ſo fine a Woman you ſay, Mrs. *Dogood?*

Enter Widow.

Do. She's here, Sir *Triſtram.*

Wid. Dogood! bleſs me! I did not know you had any body with you—

Do. A Gentleman you have often heard me talk of, Sir *Triſtram Shamtown*, Madam.

Wid. Oh Heav'ns! Sir *Triſtram Shamtown!* I am aſham'd to be caught thus in my Diſhabille—and the Houſe, O gad, the Houſe is not fit for any body to come into, much more a Gentleman of Sir *Triſtram Shamtown's* Quality.

Sham. Madam, 'tis impoſſible that any thing can be

more elegant than the Oeconomy of ev'ry thing about you——I was perfectly charm'd with your Houſe, till the Appearance of your Ladyſhip made me forget all but you.

Wid. O Sir *Triſtram!*

Sham. O Madam!

Wid. You are ſuch a Courtier———

Sham. You are ſuch a Beauty———

Wid. So full of Gallantry.———

Sham. So full of Charms———

Wid. Nay, Sir *Triſtram*———

Sham. So all over engaging, that it wou'd puzzle a Logician to define your Brightneſs.

Wid. This is too much, Sir *Triſtram.*

Sham. Madam, every body that has Eyes muſt admire you——what a Shape——pray, Mrs. *Dogood,* did you ever ſee ſo exact a Symmetry of Body?

Wid. O fye, Sir *Triſtram!* you make me bluſh to death———

Sham. What a Foot! Mrs. *Dogood,* pray look at your Lady's Foot—there's a Foot proportion'd to the Body; the Body ſuited to the Grandeur of the Face; and the Air of the Face beſpeaks the Grandeur of the Soul—

Wid. I vow, Sir *Triſtram,* you quite confound me—but you Men of Quality are ſo uſed to Rallery——

Sham. How, Madam! another ſuch a word wou'd make me curſe my Stars, grow mad, and die——Is there any need to ſay I adore you, after having ſeen you?——

Wid. Alas, Sir *Triſtram,* I have nothing in me worth the regard of a Man of your Quality——

Sham. Ah, Madam, you cannot be ignorant of the Power of your Charms, and but ſay this becauſe you think me undeſerving of your Favour—

Wid. I proteſt you wrong me, Sir. Sir *Triſtram Shamtown* cannot but know any Woman wou'd be proud of his Addreſſes.

Sham. If you receive 'em, Madam, let all your Sex beſides think as they pleaſe—Mrs. *Dogood,* you know I cannot flatter; help me to convince your Lady of the

the Sincerity of my Paſſion—for my Stock of Speeches are almoſt exhauſted.

Do. What do you think of him, Madam?

Wid. O charming! but doſt thou think he really admires me ſo much as he ſays?

Do. I never ſaw a Man ſo much tranſported.

Wid. What a difference between a Man of Quality, and the Vulgar!—— Mr. *Stately* never courted me in this Manner.

Sham. Speak, Madam, what muſt I do to prove myſelf your Beauty's Slave—Will nothing but my Death ſuffice?

Wid. O Heaven forbid, Sir *Triſtram!* I wou'd not do ſo much Injuſtice to the World, whoſe chief Ornament you are.

Sham. Your Goodneſs is equal to your Beauty.

Wid. Will you favour me ſo far, Sir *Triſtram*, as to take part of a Collation, juſt what the Houſe affords.

Sham. A Sallad, with your Ladyſhip, is preferable to Ortelans in any other Company.

Wid. Dogood, lead the way, and ſee if ev'ry thing is ready.

Do. Yes, Madam—— [*Ex.*

Wid. Sir *Triſtram!*

Sham. Exquiſite Hand!

Wid. Nay, Sir *Triſtram.*

Sham. Madam, I obey. [*Ex.*

Enter Celemena, Marilla.

Mar. Sure never any two were ſo nearly ally'd in their Misfortunes as ourſelves—Was there ever ſuch a Wretch in Human-Kind, as *Sneaksby!*

Cel. Never, unleſs it be Mr. *Toywell*; but if I had no more to fear from the Reſentment of a living Father, than you have from a dead one, I ſhou'd not think my Condition very deplorable.

Mar. You talk ſtrangely; were mine alive, I might hope by Prayers and Tears to move him, or that the Sight of *Toywell*'s Indifference might change his Mind: but as he's paſt the Knowledge of all this, and has my Vow, nothing remains for me, but Patience in my Sufferings.

Cel.

Cel. Well, I find there's no perſuading you—but for my part, I'm reſolv'd—

Mar. On what?

Cel. Never to be Wife to *Sneaksby.*

Mar. But how will you avoid it?

Cel. Nay, that I can't tell. [*Sighs.*

Mar. Here comes one may inform you, for if I know any thing of the Language of the Eyes, you underſtand one another's already.

Cel. Pſha!

Mar. Farewell, I'll be no Interruption.

Enter Gaylove.

Cel. Why, *Marilla, Marilla.*

Gay. Whither in ſuch haſte, Madam?

Mar. Your Pardon, Captain; I have Buſineſs. [*Exit.*

Gay. Have you told her our Deſign on *Toywell?*

Cel. No, nor I would not have you—I know not but ſhe may be whimſically nice enough to diſapprove the Means, tho' ſhe would bleſs the Effect.

Gay. 'Tis not impoſſible——but methinks, Madam, you ſtand here prodigiouſly indolent and degagée—I fancy you forget to-morrow is your Wedding-day—What, no Preparations? Spouſe that muſt be, is arriv'd, I ſee—but I think, at preſent, he ſeems more inclinable to pay his Addreſſes to a good Supper, than a Miſtreſs—As I came thro' the Hall juſt now, I ſaw him lay about him, like a Man of Mettle, at a piece of cold roaſt Beef, and a Tankard of Ale.

Cel. 'Tis ungenerous in you, Captain, to inſult.

Gay. Who I, Madam? I proteſt the fartheſt from it in the World——Why I thought you had been infinitely pleas'd with the Match—— and that no Diſcourſe could have been ſo agreeable as that which mention'd Mr. *Sneaksby*—And without doubt the Squire will make you prodigiouſly happy in a Husband—

Cel. Well, Captain, well.

Gay. If your ready Compliance with your Father's Commands, had not aſſur'd me 'twas your own Deſire,

ſire, I had a Project in my Head, which would certainly have left you at your liberty.

Cel. For Heaven's ſake, what?

Gay. No, Madam, no; far be it from me to ſeparate Hearts ſo ſtrictly join'd———Marry, Madam, the lovely beloved Youth;

Enjoy th' unenvy'd Title of his Wife,
While I at diſtance languiſh out my Life.

Cel. I hate your Rallery——when one has a mind to be ſerious——But tell me what you mean, and I'll forgive it.

Gay. That won't do, Madam; I have you in my power now, and you can't blame me if I follow your own Example in making uſe of it.

Cel. Duce take you——Well, but what muſt I do to bribe you then?

Gay. Why faith, Madam, no leſs than cancelling all the Injunctions you laid me under this Morning; that you will immediately, on the breaking off of this Match, put me in poſſeſſion of the ſame Title your Father deſigns to give *Sneaksby*.

Cel. O the impudent Demand! So to eſcape one Slavery, I muſt throw myſelf into another; which, for ought I know, may be as bad.

Gay. Nay, if you think ſo——

Cel. Stay, have you no Conſcience?

Gay. You hear the Price, Madam.

Cel. I thought a Lock of my Hair, or my Picture, had been a Reward, the greateſt your Ambition could have ask'd for the higheſt Obligation.

Gay. No, no, Madam——Knight-Errantry has been a long time out of Faſhion; I ſhan't bate an Ace of what I told you——but ſee, here comes your Doom, if you perſiſt in Obſtinacy.

Cel. Curſed, teazing, charming Devil.

Enter Fairman *and* Sneaksby.

Sneak. I hope, Father-in-law that muſt be, you have told her every thing, for I hate a great many Words. An' ſhe were a Man now, I ſhould know what to ſay to her; but mayhap ſhe mayn't like my way. *Fair.*

Fair. Well, well; ſhe knows your Mind.

Sneak. Why that's well enough——Your Servant, Miſtreſs.

Cel. Your Servant, Sir.

Fair. Captain, if you pleaſe, we'll walk into the next Room.

Gay. I wait upon you, Sir. You'll remember the Conditions, Madam. [*Ex.*

Cel. Hang you—Won't you pleaſe to ſit, Sir?

Sneak. No, I thank you, I'd as lief ſtand——What muſt I ſay now? I wonder what made 'em go away?

Cel. I hope he has not Courage enough to be impertinent.

Sneak. I ſuppoſe, Mrs. *Celemena*, you know that Aunt and your Father think it convenient our Wedding ſhould be to-morrow.

Cel. 'Tis ſo deſign'd, Sir, I hear.

Sneak. Nay, as the Saying is, as long as 'tis to be, the ſooner 'tis over the better—for my part, I have nothing to ſay againſt it; have you?

Cel. Not that I know of, Sir.

Sneak. Why then, I may go to the Company again, mayn't I?

Cel. With all my heart, Sir——

Sneak. Nay, do you go firſt; I an't ſo unmannerly neither.

Cel. O intolerable! Heaven grant the Captain be in earneſt—or I ſhall loſe my Senſes. [*Ex.*

Enter Graſpall *and* Wife.

Graſp. You know, Spouſe, the Duty of a Husband is to love and provide for his Wife; and, in return, the Wife is oblig'd to obey the Commands, and ſtudy the Intereſt of her Husband.

Wife. I don't know that I have given any occaſion for this Recital of a Wife's Duty.

Graſp. Far be it from me to accuſe thee——I mention Obedience to a Husband, not that I believe thee to have err'd in it, but that it being freſh in thy Memory, thou might'ſt not boggle at any thing which tends to the enriching thy Husband.

Wife.

Wife. To what purpoſe can this Harangue be made? Sir, let me know what you expect from me, and I ſhall anſwer with a ready Compliance.

Graſp. Indeed thou'rt very good, and thou would'ſt not ſcruple any thing for thy old Lovy, ha! *Pudſy?*

Wife. I hope you can command me nothing I can make a ſcruple of obeying you in——But why all theſe Precautions?

Graſp. Well, well, I ha' done——I ha' done——But remember that Obedience to a Husband ought to be the *Primum Mobile* in a Woman——Here, *Pudſy*, read this.

Wife. Heavens! a Letter from Sir *Harry*.

Graſp. Read, *Pudſy*, it's prettily turn'd——Come, I'll read it for thee.

Madam,

What I feel in the Contemplation of your Cruelty this Morning, is not to be expreſs'd: I beg you will be, at leaſt, ſo juſt, as to let me know to what I owe ſo great a Misfortune.

Your Everlaſting Admirer,

Beaumont.

Now, *Pudſy*, you ſhall ſee if I had not a tender Regard for your Youth, and a juſt Conſideration of my own Age. I fitted him with a Letter in your Name.

Wife. I am undone——O! Sir, I beg you on my Knees, whatever Appearances may be againſt me, you will not think me guilty of Diſhonour; for on my Soul——

Graſp. Riſe prithee, I am not jealous——Hear what I writ to him——I have the Copy——O here 'tis.

Wife. What will this come to?

Graſp. Now, *Pudſy*, you ſhall hear.

Sir,

The Satisfaction you require of me ſhall be made you, if you will give yourſelf the trouble to meet me in the little Field behind our Garden, at four a-clock this Afternoon——

Your Humble Servant,

Suſanna Graſpall.

Wife.

Wife. And did you ſend him this impudent Letter in my Name?

Graſp. Have patience——Condemn me when you have reaſon, *Pudſy.*

Wife. I know not what to think.

Graſp. The appointed Hour, and the Lover, came together; whom I accoſted with, *Sir* Harry, *your Humble Servant*, and ſo forth.

Wife. Heavens! how I tremble?

Graſp. And then it ſeems, ſaid I, by this Letter, which accidentally fell into my hands, that you have ſome Affairs to negotiate with my Wife. Now ſhe being under Covert-Baron, can tranſact nothing without my leave; for which reaſon, and believing my Age and Experience might enable me to treat more effectually with you, I anſwer'd your Letter——Nay, Sir *Harry*, ſaid I, don't bluſh, (for he did look curſedly confus'd, that he did) a Sword and a Wife, ſaid I, are both uſeleſs to me; and as I wear one for the Ornament of my Dreſs, ſo I marry'd the other as a Grace to my Houſe——

Wife. Where will this end?

Graſp. Now, Sir *Harry*, ſays I, whoever has the uſe of my Sword, it's but reaſonable he pay for the furbiſhing——and if you really have ſo violent a Paſſion for my Wife, as your Letter intimates, pay the Money down ſhe has expended me in Clothes, and allow me ſome Conſideration for the pity I have of your Sufferings, and I here give you free Ingreſs, Egreſs, and Regreſs——I was ſome time before I could perſuade him that I was in earneſt.

Wife. In earneſt, Sir!

Graſp. Ay, *Pudſy*; for a good while I could not make him believe I really deſign'd him the favour of paying me 2000 *l.* the Price I ſet for giving him the liberty to——viſit thee now and then, that's all——But I convinc'd him at laſt, and he immediately ſent the Sum propos'd to my Houſe, in a ſtrong Box, with Condition only of keeping the Key, till you ſet your Hand to the Covenant. Now, *Pudſy*, if thou haſt any Love for thy old Hubby, never let ſuch a Sum depart the Houſe,

Houſe, by a fooliſh Denial——if thou doſt, it is as bad as robbing me, for whatever I have in my Cuſtody, I always look upon as my own.

Wife. Is it poſſible you can have ſo mean a Spirit?——Or do you believe, if you have ſo ſordid and groveling a Soul, that I can, regardleſs of my Fame, and loſt to Vertue, yield to ſuch a deteſted Bargain?

Graſp. Dear, dear *Pudſy!*——don't be too haſty in reſolving——conſider, will Fame ever get thee 2000 *l.*? Remember, *Pudſy*! two thouſand Pounds! when I think what a Sum it is, I ſweat at the Apprehenſion of Virtue.

Wife. And would you be a Cuckold?

Graſp. Two thouſand Pounds, *Pudſy*——

Wife. Deſpis'd and pointed at.

Graſp. Two thouſand Pounds——

Wife. Become the publick Scorn, and all for Gain, a little trifling Traſh.

Graſp. A little, doſt thou call it? I wiſh thy Virtue has not flown into thy Head, and turn'd thy Brain——Why what doſt thou value thy Virtue at?

Wife. The world cannot repair the loſs of it.

Graſp. Ah! to be ſure thou art a little touch'd, but don't think that I'll be fool'd out of the ſtrong Box——if you are mad, I am not; and you had beſt conſent quietly to what I deſire, or I ſhall make you——'Sbud I have been too humble——

Wife. No Huband's power extends to force the Execution of unlawful Commands—But ſure you cannot be ſo dead to Shame, to wiſh it ſeriouſly.

Graſp. Seriouſly! why there 'tis now——Don't I tell you that 2000 *l.* are in a ſtrong Box, and that I have that Box in keeping, and that there is nothing hinders me from being Maſter of it, but your refuſing to perform Articles.

Wife. Monſtrous Stupidity! not to be believ'd!

Graſp. But you'll believe it, I hope, when you find Sir *Harry* tells you the ſame thing——I have appointed him to come this Night——I'll give you half an Hour to conſider on't——but would adviſe you not to be a Fool, nor think to make me ſo—— [*Ex. Wife.*

Wife. Thou mak'ſt thyſelf a wretched, wicked Fool: Was ever any thing like this?

Enter Amadea.

Amad. Start not, Madam, I have overheard all, and know not whether my Admiration of your Virtue, or Amazement at your Husband's baſe Intention, moſt takes up my Thoughts.

Wife. Expos'd to him——Heav'ns! this Story will be the Jeſt of the whole Country——Whatever are my Husband's Faults, is not your buſineſs to examine—and 'twas unmannerly to liſten to our private Conference.

Amad. I doubt not of your Pardon for this and many other Actions, which have ſeem'd impertinent, when you ſhall know my Reaſons for Curioſity; which now, fully convinc'd of your Virtue, and confident of your Good-nature and Compaſſion, I ſhall make no ſcruple of revealing——I am a Woman, Madam.

Wife. A Woman!

Amad. My Name *Amadea*—deſcended from a Family I need not bluſh to own——bleſt with a Fortune equal to my Birth, and bred in expectation of the faireſt Hopes——Sir *Harry Beaumont* once was not aſham'd to own to all who knew him, he thought me worthy of the tendereſt Paſſion.

Wife. A Woman! and Sir *Harry Beaumont*'s Miſtreſs——

Amad. His Wife, if Vows can make me ſo——therefore in ſuch a Circumſtance, you cannot wonder I took all Opportunities to dive into the Secret of his coming hither——You ſhall hereafter be inform'd of all the Particulars of my Story—but the time allow'd you for Conſideration is ſo ſhort, I muſt defer it, and only beg you (for in your power alone it is) to help a wretched Woman, and ſave me from eternal Ruin and Deſpair.

Wife. Alas! what can I do?

Amad. Seem to conſent to what your Husband asks, and leave the reſt to me.

Wife. How will that ſerve you?

Amad.

Amad. You shall know anon——In the mean time, I conjure you to dissemble a Compliance———your Virtue shall not suffer by your Charity to me.

Wife. Well you shall persuade me.

Amad.—*Heav'n will reward the generous Aid you lend,*
And the soft Wishes of my Soul befriend:
Since, true to Virtue, my Endeavours aim
Only the dear false Rover to reclaim.

The End of the Third Act.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Dogood, Shamble, *and* Widow.

Wid. INDEED, Sir *Tristram*, this Offer of your Sister for my Nephew, convinces me the most of any thing of your Affection———I wish there were a way for me to get off with Mr. *Fairman*.

Sham. Madam, the Passion I have for you makes me study your Interest, which I think you ought to prefer to Ceremony——My Sister's Fortune, which is 5000 *l.* more than Mr. *Fairman* proffers with his Daughter, is in her own hands, and I'll undertake she shall be content with only her own Money settled on her.

Wid. That is obliging indeed———I was certainly bewitch'd when I agreed to Mr. *Fairman*'s Proposal——But alas! I did not think of marrying then, nor am I sure I shall yet.

Sham. How, Madam! not sure of marrying? You have undone my Quiet——drove me to Despair, and with-

without you retract thoſe cruel Words, you ſhall very ſoon ſee the fatal Conſequence.

Wid. Nay, Sir *Triſtram*, I only ſaid———

Sham. O you have ruin'd me! Farewell Board-Wages and Lac'd Liveries! Farewell all Joy, all Peace of Mind, all Happineſs———Welcome ye ſolitary Groves and baleful Yew, ye purling Streams and cooing Doves; behold the unhappy *Shamtown* oppreſs'd with Grief, and ſunk with ſad Deſpair, joins in your Moan! the cruel Stately ſcorns my Paſſion.

Wid. Sir *Triſtram*, won't you hear me?

Sham. Oh! can I bear a doubt of that Happineſs I ſo ardently deſire, and yet live? No, no, Death will ſoon eaſe me of theſe Pains———I will rip up this faithful Breaſt, and ſhew my panting Heart.

Wid. Sir *Triſtram*, I did not ſay that——

Sham. Was it for this you gave me hopes? Did you raiſe me up but to make my Fall the greater?

Wid. Why, Sir *Triſtram!* Lard, I think he's run mad indeed—What ſhall I ſay to him, *Dogood?*

Do. Tell him you'll marry him this minute——Say any thing.

Wid. Then, Sir *Triſtram*, to ſhew you——

Sham. What unhappy Deſtiny drove me here, or firſt fix'd my Eyes on that lovely cruel Woman——Oh that I could forget I ever ſaw you!

Wid. Why, Sir *Triſtram*, to convince you that I am not cruel, ſend for a Parſon, and make me my Lady *Shamtown*.

Sham. Ha! do you mock my Grief? Nay, then Death muſt be my Portion. [*Offers to fall on his Sword.*

Do. Ah!

Wid. Ah! for Goodneſs ſake, Sir *Triſtram*, I am in earneſt, I vow and ſwear——I will marry you this minute, if you pleaſe.

Sham. Can it be poſſible—But I'll not believe I am ſo happy.

Wid. Then follow me, and put it to the proof. [*Exit.*

Do. You'd make a rare Actor.

Sham. Send for a Parſon, leſt ſome unlucky Accident

dent should prevent us——I'm quite out of breath. [Ex.

Enter Celemena *and* Gaylove.

Gay. Well, Madam, what think you of my Plots? You see, as near as your Cousin *Marilla* thought herself to *Hymen*, my Contrivance is in a fair way to make her lose sight of him.

Cel. I can't but say you are like to be successful enough, and I should be very apt to employ you in the same Business, if you were not so exorbitant in your Demands.

Gay. Good Workmen, Madam, will have good Prices—I would fain do your Business once for all—If I should be compassionate enough to hew off this Rub in your way for little or nothing, who knows but another may start up——No, no, let me see you at your Journey's end——Lodge you safe in Matrimony, and I'll trust to your Management afterwards.

Cel. You are very confident of your own Abilities, I find—But suppose you should be mistaken——Many a Woman has been glad of a Fool after Matrimony, that she would have despis'd before.

Gay. That's because then she has a Husband too wise.

Enter Courtly.

Court. Dear *Gaylove*, I am infinitely oblig'd to thee—*Toywell* is grown so insolent to *Marilla*, that if she should still persist in her Resolution of marrying him, I think 'twould cure my Passion.

Cel. 'Twas almost come to a downright Quarrel, when we left 'em.

Court. Nothing to what is now—Here they come, pray observe 'em.

Enter Marilla *and* Toywell.

Mar. I wish, Mr. *Toywell*, you'd forbear your Visits, unless you could behave yourself with more good Manners—You play the Husband too soon.

Toy.

Toy. And to deal plainly with you, Madam, I think you play the Wife too ſoon.

Mar. If I never give you leave to call me by that Title, your Uſage would almoſt excuſe my Breach of Vow.

Toy. Why really, Madam, I believe, of all Womankind, your Charms have the leaſt effect on me—and I don't think 'twould be the death of me, if you ſhould refuſe me that Bleſſing of calling you my Wife—If that's your Deſire, pray let me know it; probably I may have Tenderneſs enough for you, to give up my Pretenſions on very eaſy Terms.

Mar. Say on what? ſay on any—Leave me but a Competency for Bread, and take the reſt of my Fortune.

Toy. Which is little enough, if ſhe knew all—Look ye, Madam, tho' you are ſo cruel as to tax me with Indifference, to ſhew you how vaſt a Regard I have for your Eaſe, I will forgo all the Happineſs I propos'd in the Poſſeſſion of ſo much Beauty, and now ſwear from my Soul, in the Preſence of theſe Witneſſes, that upon no account will I, *John Toywell*, ever be the Husband of you, *Marilla Fairman*.

Mar. I thank you, and with Joy receive my Liberty.

Court. Now, Madam, may I not hope?

Mar. The Uſage I have receiv'd from him, is ſufficient to make me hate all Men. [*Ex.*

Court. Yes, Madam. [*Ex.*

Gay. Why, are you in earneſt, Mr. *Toywell*? really quitted your Pretenſions?

Toy. Really! Ay, Captain—'twou'd have been carrying the Jeſt too far, to have marry'd her without a Portion—There ſtands one, and a good agreeable Woman——Egad, I think I'll make Love to her.

Gay. But you know ſhe's to be marry'd to *Sneaksby*.

Toy. It's no matter for that—do you think ſhe'd be ſuch a Fool to refuſe me for him?

Gay. But you have affronted her Couſin, don't you believe ſhe'll reſent it?

Toy. Pſha! I'll tell her 'twas for her Sake.

Gay.

Gay. Nay, you may try: Madam, here's a Gentleman is fallen desperately in Love with you on the sudden—

Col. Who? what do you mean?

Gay. That he must explain.

Toy. Madam, I long have ador'd you; 'tis impossible to tell you with how much Ardor; that, your Glass must inform you, because nothing else can give you any just Idea of your Perfections.

Col. The Fool's distracted sure; or is it your Contrivance too?

Gay. No, faith, Madam, 'tis all his own—

Toy. Till this happy Moment Madam, I was not at my own Disposal—but was oblig'd to smother all the Transports of my Soul, when I beheld you—

Gay. Hold, Mr. *Toywell*—take care—here's a Rival approaching, trebly arm'd with Mead, Syder, and Metheglin.

Toy. What *Sneaksby* drunk! O the Putt!

Enter Sneaksby *drunk.*

Sneak. Adod! Father-in-law keeps good Liquor; but 'tis plaguy heady—who's here? O Mistress! Wife that must be, here tie my Neckcloth—

Col. Oh hideous! really Sir, I don't know how.

Sneak. Not know how! you are very fit for a Wife indeed! mayhap you'll never learn.

Col. 'Tis possible.

Toy. O the Brute, how he smells! sure Madam, you cannot consent to bury your Youth and Beauty in the Arms of that Wretch—

Col. Whatever he is, I prefer him to a Fop—— Mr. *Sneaksby*, you are not apt to be jealous, I hope—— Mr. *Toywell* is making Love to me——How do you approve of it?

Sneak. Making Love to you—ugh!

Toy. Well, Sir; and what then, Sir? what if I do, Sir—Egad I may bully him.

Gay. I don't know but these two Coxcombs might afford some Diversion—if we had time to work 'em to any Pitch.

Sneak. Ugh——why then, mayhap, you may make me a Cuckold——

Toy. And what then, Sir——

Sneak. Ha! ugh! what then, Sir——why then? mayhap I may break your Sconce, I'll tell you but that.

Toy. How, Sir! gad I'll charm her with my Courage. Do you see this, Sir? [*Draws.*

Sneak. Why, Mistress, do you stand there, and see your Husband that is to be——murder'd——but he shall kill you first, I'll tell you but that.

Gay. O Sir! he'll do you no hurt——Come, put up, Mr. *Toywell*, put up.

Sneak. Nay, you shan't stir.

Col. Out, filthy Creature!

Sneak. What's the Matter—ugh——

Col. Oh insufferable! Captain, help me.

Gay. Ha, ha, ha,——come Mr. *Toywell*, you see your Antagonist is not *se defendendo*——'twill be generous to lend your Arm to help him in.

Col. Oh, I am poison'd! [*Exit.*

Toy. In Complaisance to you, Capt.——faugh! how he stinks.

Sneak. Ugh! What are you doing——Murder, Murder!——where are you carrying me? Murder!

Enter Servants.

1 *Serv.* Murder! What's the Matter?

Gay. Why, your young Master that is to be, as he says, is a little overtaken, that's all.

1 *Serv.* O, the Squire's drunk.

Sneak. Murder, Murder!

Gay. There; there lug him in—— [*Ex.*

Enter Beaumont *and* Graspall.

Beau. Well, my kind Sollicitor, what Hopes? shall we enjoy our Mistress, or not? Here's the Key, old *Mammon*, gives you Admittance to your Yellow Beauties—methinks thy Looks foretel Success, and say, your Wife gives ear to Reason——

Grasp. Ah, Sir *Harry*, what Pains have I taken?

Beau. But to what purpoſe, my old *Plutus?* What's the Succeſs; is ſhe ſtill cruel? and muſt I ſend for the Box?

Graſp. When the Box goes, your Suit ends, good Sir *Harry*—Ev'n *Jove* had been repuls'd, if a Show'r of Gold had not introduc'd him—my Reaſons had, I hope, ſome effect, and I left her—

Beau. How, my dear *Graſpall?*

Graſp. Like the Sea after a Storm, tho' the Winds are laid, there yet remains ſome Swell—which muſt have time to ſettle—But the Key, Sir *Harry*.

Beau. Nay, I muſt have ſome Aſſurance that I don't part with ſuch a Sum for nothing: the Minute your Wife conſents—

Graſp. Conſents! 'sbud ſhe had as good meet a hungry Lion, as pronounce the firſt Letter of a Denial—I'll have the Letters *N. O.* ſtruck out of the Alphabet, except to poor Rogues that come for Money, and there, Self-preſervation makes it lawful.

Beau. Farewel. [*Ex.*

Graſp. I'm in the Houſe, if you want Help—Since I can't perſuade him out of the Key, I'll force the Box: let him take the ſame Method if he pleaſes, with his Miſtreſs.—Bleſs me! that Sir *Harry*, eſteem'd a Man of Wit, can part with ſuch a Sum, for ſuch a Bauble as a Woman! [*Ex.*

Enter Mrs. Graſpall, Beaumont.

Wife. And is it poſſible then, Sir *Harry*, that you can have join'd with my Husband in an Attempt at once ſo ridiculous and baſe—but tho' your Gold has had this Influence on his ſordid Nature, know I deſpiſe the Man who dares believe 'twill bribe me out of my Honour.

Beau. Far be it from me, Madam, ever to have harbour'd ſuch a Thought; and as the Propoſal was made by your Husband, 'tis he alone you ſhould condemn.

Wife. But you agreed to't.

Beau. If I had not, you might have believ'd I had thought so small a Sum more valuable than your Favour.

Wife. You have taken a very wrong Method to obtain it: But as for him, base, mean-spirited, and sordid as he is, he is my Husband still———nor will I wrong him, tho' by his own Consent.

Beau. Can you have so much value for a Man, who, tastless of your Charms, and ignorant of the Treasure he is master of, wou'd barter it for Trash—if no Compassion for my Sufferings wou'd move you, methinks the Injury he does you, shou'd prompt you to revenge.

Wife. What you call revenging Injuries, is being accessary to 'em.

Beau. Your Husband has transferr'd his Right to me; and if deaf to Arguments, has giv'n me Pow'r to seize———

Wife. Which if you dare attempt——

Beau. Be not frighted, Madam; I never gave you cause to think I'd be a Villain——Honour has always been the Guide of my Actions——and 'tis that now whispers me, No Epithet's so vile, as that of Ravisher.

Wife. And does it not inform you too, you ought not to ask of me what Honour forbids me to grant—you look confounded——Oh, Sir *Harry!* how forcible is Truth, tho' ne'er so plainly utter'd?———Not all your Learning, Wit, or Artifice, can form an Answer in contradiction to this short Demand.

Beau. Madam, I will not answer on this Theme——because I know that all the Arguments I cou'd bring, wou'd, to a Woman of your Temper, appear too weak to convince you that all those Conversations, which the World calls criminal, are not also really dishonourable in themselves——nay, I will own to you, that I cou'd wish there were a Possibility for me to love you less, unless my Passion cou'd appear in a more noble Light.

Wife. 'Tis generously confess'd—but why will you then persist to urge a Suit your Reason does condemn?

Beau. Ah, lovely Creature——you may as well ask Madmen why they rave——but do not miſtake me; when I ſay I wiſh I lov'd you leſs, 'tis not becauſe my Reaſon tells me 'tis a Fault, but becauſe it is not in my pow'r to give you ſo convincing a Proof as I wou'd do, of my ſincere Affection: the Flame I feel for you, is in it ſelf ſo pure, I grieve it ſhou'd appear in any Likeneſs with thoſe unconſtant Fires which baſe Deſires create; I tremble when I approach you; and tho' I'd forfeit Life to touch that Hand, ſo fearful am I to offend, I dare not ask it——Conſider, Madam, and juſtly weigh the difference between us.—Did *Townell* treat you thus?

Wife. That Wretch's Impudence was owing to his Folly—if I look into your Deſigns, they are the ſame; and you, but with more Art, wou'd ruin me.

Beau. By Heav'n I wou'd not——your Reputation ſhou'd be ſacred and unblaſted——the dear, the happy Secret ſafe lodg'd within my Soul, ſhou'd take no Air, nor let in the leaſt room for a Conjecture——then for your Fears, thoſe little Fears, which all your Sex are prone to, and which the Inconſtancy of ours too frequently gives Cauſe for, I'd follow you, as now, with Sighs and Pray'rs, and ardent Vows of everlaſting Paſſion.

Wife. Then you'll allow that Conſtancy's the only Teſt of true Affection.

Beau. Moſt ſure it is, the only certain one.

Wife. How am I then ſecure of yours, till I have purchas'd the Experiment at a Rate too dear——I muſt reſign my Honour, my Vertue, and my Peace of Mind, before I can promiſe myſelf the leaſt Aſſurance I have not done all this for an ungrateful Man——

Beau. There are a thouſand Marks by which you may diſtinguiſh which Paſſions will be laſting, and which not—and if repeated Vows and Imprecations can have Force—

Wife. No, Sir *Harry*; I know with how much eaſe you Men abſolve yourſelves the Breach of Vows in an

Affair of this nature———but ſince you have confeſt that Conſtancy's the only Proof of true Affection, anſwer me, did you ne'er love before?

Beau. Suppoſe I did; if I hereafter ſhall love none but you, the former Errors of my Fancy may be forgiv'n.

Wife. But tell me if you did; and I conjure you, ſpeak with the ſame Sincerity as you wou'd anſwer Heav'n—

Beau. What can ſhe mean? few Men, Madam, I believe, who have travell'd ſo far as I have done, had ſuch Variety of Converſations, (ſome of which perhaps have not been over-nice) and ſeen ſuch Numbers of fine Women, can boaſt an entire Continency. I do not deny but I have met Temptations in my way, which Youth and Inadvertency, at ſome unguarded Hours, have yielded to.

Wife. I ſpeak not of thoſe ſlight and tranſient Paſſions, but of a Flame which bore the ſhow of Honourable—did you not—anſwer without Equivocation, did you not, (neglecting all the reſt) never addreſs one Favourite Fair?

Beau. Ha! But whate'er ſhe aims at, I ſcorn the Baſeneſs of a Lye———Yes, Madam———I confeſs, I once before, and ne'er but once, knew what it was to love——But why this Queſtion, and with ſuch Earneſtneſs?

Wife. You ſhall be told—Pray who was ſhe?

Beau. She was a Woman, Madam, whoſe Deſerts might well excuſe my Paſſion———But why this Enquiry?

Wife. But one thing more, and you ſhall know. Since ſo belov'd, and ſo deſerving, why are you diſunited? Grew ſhe unkind?

Beau. I am ſo confounded, I know not what to ſay. O *Amadea!* now thy Image riſes to my View, and brings my broken Vows to my Remembrance.

Wife. What ſay you, Sir? Did ſhe prove falſe? or is ſhe dead?

Beau. Neither, Madam—but, pray no more—This Talk is foreign to the kind End your Husband brought me for.

Wife.

Wife. Stand off, perfidious Man! by your own Mouth you are condemn'd——ſince, as yourſelf confeſs, Conſtancy's the only Proof of Love and Honour, how can you be juſtify'd by either? You own you lov'd, where both Deſert and Kindneſs join'd to engage——yet, full of your Sex's Falſhood and Ingratitude, that Conqueſt gain'd, you offer to another your proſtituted Heart, and think a little idle Flattery can win me to accept your violated Faith.

Beau. I have loſt her by my Plainneſs—What you ſpeak of, Madam, happen'd a long time ago, we now are ſeparated——Forgive what is paſt—your Beauty, as it juſtifies my Change, will alſo be your own Security for my future Conſtancy.

Wife. I'll hear no more—nor is it my Buſineſs to judge either your paſt or preſent Actions— Come forth, *Amadea.*—

Beau. Amadea!

Enter Amadea *in her own Clothes.*

Wife. If you can obtain a Pardon here, mine will not be long with-held.

Beau. 'Tis ſhe indeed!

Ama. Turn not away confus'd; I ſhall believe you never knew the Force of Love, if you can doubt my Readineſs to pardon——You wrong me more by this unkind Delay to meet my ſtretch'd-out Arms, than e'er you did in your Addreſſes there.

Beau. Can there be ſo much Generoſity in Nature!

Ama. Come, Sir *Harry*, look on me, and as you juſt now ſaid, forget what's paſt: By Heav'n! your future Kindneſs will more than expiate all you have done, or would have done to wrong me.

Beau. Excellent Woman! may I then believe thee—Can it be poſſible that thou (who, I perceive, art well acquainted with my Crime) can'ſt wiſh to pardon it, and again receive me to that ſoft Breaſt, that lovely Manſion of eternal Truth?

Ama. I now am fully recompens'd.

Beau. Thou Prodigy of Goodneſs—to find thou haſt

left *London*, thy Father, Friends, Relations and Acquaintance—to meet thee here—here in this Scene of guilty Wiſhes, ſo ſtrangely, ſo unexpected, fills me at once with Shame, with Joy, and Wonder.

Ama. Could *London*, my Father's Houſe, or the Society of any Friends, bring Comfort to me, when I ſaw not you? 'Twas enough to know that *Beaumont* was in *Saliſbury*, to wing the Feet of *Amadea* hither——Beſides, you may remember the News of your Uncle's Death took you away ſo ſuddenly, I ſcarce had time for one ſhort Adieu——You writ to me indeed, and made me hope a quick Return; but in a little time (tho' I'm unwilling to mention paſt Unkindneſs) you left off even that diſtant Converſation——I writ, and writ again, but had no Anſwer—at firſt I thought my Letters had miſcarry'd——but long Expectance at laſt grew weary, and I reſolv'd to know the Truth of what I then began to fear; and to that end left *London* in Diſguiſe.

Beau. In Diſguiſe!

Ama. I dreſs'd me in a Suit of my Brother's Clothes, which happening to be out of Town, he had left behind him, and came down here in the Stage-Coach—At the Inn where I alighted, I met Mr. *Graſpall*, who hearing me inquire for Lodgings, made me an Offer of a Chamber in his Houſe, where I have been ever ſince; and by that means had an Opportunity of finding out that Secret, which now you are ſo good to acknowledge as a Fault.

Beau. And ever ſhall——Nor will this Lady think me unmannerly, when I declare, I ought to have been blind to every Charm but yours.

Wife. Sir *Harry*, I rejoice in your Converſion, and I hope you are too ſincerely touch'd with a Senſe of your late Errors to repeat 'em.

Beau. O never! This unexampled Tenderneſs and Generoſity has charm'd my very Soul——nor will we ever be divided more; but as by ſolemn Vows we have long ſince been one, my Chaplain to-morrow ſhall ratify the Contract.

Wife.

Wife. I heartily congratulate the Happineſs of you both; but notwithſtanding the real Pleaſure it gives me to ſee every thing ſo well anſwer the End I propos'd by this Meeting, I cannot find in my heart to forgive my Husband's baſe Deſign upon me, and have thought of a way to be reveng'd, if you'll vouchſafe me your Aſſiſtance.

Beau. I dare anſwer you may command us both.

Wife. This Lady muſt put on her Men's Clothes once more.

Ama. Moſt willingly, they have been fortunate to me.

Wife. Within I'll tell you my Deſign——pleaſe to walk——

Beau. We'll follow, Madam.

Ye falſe-nam'd Pleaſures of my Youth farewell,
They charm'd my Senſe, but you ſubdue my Soul.
Tho' fix'd to you alone, I've pow'r to change,
While o'er each Beauty of your Form I range.
Nor to thoſe only need I be confin'd,
But changing ſtill, enjoy thy beauteous Mind.

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Graſpall *and Wife.*

Wife. NAY, you won't be ſo ungrateful to deny me ſo ſmall a Requeſt, when I have broke thro' all Objections to oblige you.

Graſp. I would deny thee nothing, *Puſſy*; but thou doſt not conſider what an Inconvenience, as well as an Expence, this will be.

Wife. Inconvenience! where can be the Inconvenience of having a few Friends to be merry with you?

Graſp. A few! why thou haſt nam'd half the County. I think——but prithee, let me hear them over again.

Wife. Why in the firſt place, Sir *Harry Beaumont*; you won't grudge him a Dinner out of his 2000 *l.* ſure?

Graſp. If he is not ſatisfy'd with the Meal you have given him, he ſhould e'en faſt till Doomſday for me—But go on———

Wife. Mr. *Courtly*; he is Sir *Harry*'s Intimate, and 'twill be rude to leave him out.

Graſp. Well, who elſe?

Wife. The Widow *Stately*——She is our next Neighbour, you know, and muſt be invited.

Graſp. So——to the reſt.

Wife. Mr. *Fairman*, his Niece, and Daughter, and their two Lovers, Squire *Sneakſby* and Mr. *Toywell*; and if you find any Company at their Houſe, as they ſeldom are without, they muſt be ask'd.

Graſp. Very well—and theſe you call a few—beſides a Retinue of Servants at the heels of 'em, of more than twice double the Number——A Pack of romping, tearing, hungry Hounds, that will eat me out of houſe and

and home, tho' I had laid in for a Siege. 'Sdeath, how can you be ſo inconſiderate?

Wife. Well, I'll never ask you any thing again—but remember, that if ever you make any more Bargains for me, your Unkindneſs has given me a very good Pretence to refuſe making 'em good.

Graſp. Ha! let me conſider—ſhe'll be ſpiteful enough, that's certain, and who knows, but among theſe Blades I may find a Fool as willing to part with his Money as Sir *Harry?*——I have a good mind to let her have her Will for once. Well *Pudſy*——ſuppoſe I ſhould oblige thee in this, thou wilt never be refractory hereafter, wilt thou?

Wife. Not when 'tis for your Intereſt, *Tony*.

Graſp. I ſhall never ask any thing of thee, *Pudſy*, that is not for the Intereſt of us both.

Wife. But ſince you have conſented to have this Company here to-day, 'tis time they were invited.

Graſp. Well, I'll go—but, *Pudſy*, dear *Pudſy*, prithee bate me the Severity of one Article.

Wife. What's that?

Graſp. Give me leave to deſire they would not bring their Footmen with 'em.

Wife. Fye! you would not make yourſelf ſo ridiculous

Graſp. Well, for once— [*Going.*

Wife. Stay, *Tony*——I proteſt I had like to have been guilty of a piece of Ill-Manners I ſhould never have forgiven myſelf—

Graſp. What now?

Wife. I am told there's a Baronet lately come down, I can't think of his Name, but he's at the Widow *Stately*'s—you muſt be ſure to entreat the Favour of his good Company.

Graſp. The Devil.

Wife. You muſt not omit him by any means.

Graſp. No, no—Was ever Man thus plagu'd?

Wife. Well, go about it then, while I prepare for their Reception. Beſure not to forget.

Graſp. No, no, no—if I ſtay much longer, ſhe'll remember as many more. [*Exit.*

Wife. I'll fit you for your Bargain, Sir. [*Exit.*

Enter Gaylove *and* Celemena.

Cel. 'Tis now no time for Diſſimulation, Captain; I freely own nothing is ſo terrible to me as the Thoughts of being *Sneaksby*'s Wife---therefore, if in earneſt you can find any way to diſappoint my Father in his deſign of marrying me to that Idiot, I give you leave to hope, I may one day have the Opinion of you, you wiſh.

Gay. That is not ſufficient, Madam; I muſt have an immediate Security for your Performance of Articles, before I undertake any thing.

Cel. Why, I hope you have not ſeriouſly the Confidence to think of gaining me ſo ſoon---Do you think it reaſonable, that a Woman, who believes herſelf in ſome meaſure agreeable, ſhould loſe the pleaſure of ſeeing her Lover tremble at her Approach, and by his Sighs and Melancholy, betray the Paſſion he has for her to all who know him, admire all ſhe ſays, and cry up all ſhe does, and threaten to poiſon, ſtab, or drown himſelf to pacify her, whenever ſhe happens to be in the humour of giving pain.

Gay. But, Madam, I believe 'Squire *Sneaksby* never read Romances, and will perhaps think it an unreaſonable Requeſt, ſhould you deſire him either to poiſon, ſtab, or drown himſelf---Therefore, Madam, ſince all theſe Preludiums, one way or other, muſt be cut off; you had e'en as good venture on me, and imagine that if there was time for it, I would willingly come into all theſe Methods to obtain you.

Cel. But do you conſider what you ask? Tho' my Father proffers *Sneaksby* 10000 *l.* to take his Daughter off his hands, I queſtion whether he may be in the ſame Humour when *Gaylove* has me.

Gay. It is you, not your Fortune, that I am ambitious of. My Commiſſion will keep us from want, if your Father gives you nothing; and when mine dies,

dies, his Estate, for the greater Part, is entail'd on me: and without being romantick, I shall think it but a poor Purchase for my *Columna*.

Col. Well, let me consider——Here's a Coach and Six with my Father's Commands, and 10000 *l.* to back it——On the other hand, 16 *s.* a Day, and the Title of a Captain's Lady, with a reasonable Suspicion of being turn'd out of doors with never a Groat—But then, on this side, I've a Fool——on that, a Man not disagreeable, and of allow'd Sense——One marries me upon Compact, the other generously runs the risque of a Fortune——Well, *Gaylove*, I think you carry the day——I'll lay aside the Woman for once——Here's my Hand.

Gay. My future Carriage shall show my Gratitude for the Blessing, and——

Col. Come, no Raptures——you are a Man of Honour, and I expect you'll keep your Promise——I can't bear this Coxcomb's Impertinence——Prithee banter him a little, while I retire to think on what I've done.

[*Ex.*

Enter Toywell.

Toy. O Captain *Gaylove!* are you here? You have serv'd me finely!

Gay. As how, good Sir?

Toy. Why did not you tell me that Mr. *Trusty* the Banker was broke? and I saw a Letter from him just now, which says, he's in as good a Condition as ever.

Gay. Is he so? Faith I'm glad on't.

Toy. O! but you have ruin'd me, I have lost *Marilla* by it.

Gay. Why what's *Marilla* to *Trusty*?

Toy. Why he has her Fortune in his Hands—and if he had fail'd, she had been no Wife for me——So, upon what you have told me, I broke off, and releas'd her from all Ties.

Gay. Why 'tis none of my Fault——Did I advise you to't?

Toy. No; for that matter, 'twas all my own doing—

But

But I'll go and throw myſelf at her feet, and if ſhe has any Compaſſion——

Gay. You may ſpare yourſelf the pains, for to my certain Knowledge, there's a terrible ill-natur'd Fellow, with a Sword like a Scythe, pretends a Right to her—— [*Sings.*

With whom you cannot grapple,
For at one Sup,
He'd eat you up,
As Boys do eat an Apple.

Toy. Gad's Curſe! So I am to loſe my Miſtreſs for an old Song?

Gay. His Name is *Courtly*, do you know ſuch a Man?

Toy. Courtly! Pho, I've a better Eſtate than he has.

Gay. But he underſtands a Sword better than you do——Come, take my Advice, and be merry——and when you ſee *Courtly*, wiſh him Joy, with an Air of Indifference——for they are, by this time, marry'd; ſeem pleas'd with what you can't help, for to my knowledge you'll get little by Reſentment.

Toy. Pſha! I don't care this Pinch of Snuff, and ſince ſhe's gone——let her go.

Gay. Ay, this becomes you——it ſhows you are a Man above Diſappointment——But here they come——now let me ſee you bear your Misfortunes like a Man untouch'd by 'em.

Toy. You ſhall ſee me accoſt her with the Unconcern of a tir'd Keeper.

Enter Courtly, Celemena, *and* Marilla.

Mar. Your Importunity, Mr. *Courtly*, incenſes me as much as Mr. *Toywell*'s Indifference; and if you think to teaze me into a Compliance, you ſhall find yourſelf deceiv'd.

Gay. How's this?

Toy. Ha! I find things are not ſo bad as I thought.

Court. Heav'n is not diſpleas'd with Prayers and Adorations——'Tis with the moſt awful diſtance I purſue you, the tendereſt Paſſion, and ſincereſt Vows.

Mar.

Mar. Perhaps I'm fix'd never to marry—and if ſo, ſhall no more endeavour to force my Inclinations, than you to govern yours.

Toy. O! Madam, can you forgive my Raſhneſs, occaſion'd by the Violence of my Paſſion, for a belief I was not ſo well in your Eſteem as I deſir'd to be?

Gay. What a devil! have you a mind to have your Throat cut?

Mar. O! Mr. *Toywell*, do you repent? Then I'll ſoon put an end to Mr. *Courtly*'s Importunities.

Toy. Ah Madam! how ſhall I requite your Goodneſs?

Mar. Hold Sir! thank me when I deſerve it—— Mr. *Courtly*, you have given me daily Uneaſineſs, haunting me from place to place, ſcarce leaving me a moment, and endeavouring by your Conſtancy to merit me; anſwer me, Guilty, or not?

Court. Guilty, Madam.

Mar. You, Mr. *Toywell*, on the contrary—

Toy. Ay, Madam.

Mar. Always ſhunn'd the Places I frequented, never diſcover'd your Paſſion by either Words or Actions, or hoped by Aſſiduity to gain me.

Toy. Not I, Madam, upon my Soul——I carry'd myſelf ſo, that no Man on Earth would ever have thought I had valu'd you in the leaſt, not I——I had more Senſe—Poor *Courtly*, how he looks! he's finely fobb'd.

Gay. What will this come to?

Mar. Know then, that I reſolve to give myſelf to him who moſt deſerves me.

Gay. That's eaſily diſtinguiſh'd, Madam—

Toy. Ay, Captain, ſo 'tis—faith I pity *Courtly*—But the Lady muſt follow her Inclinations, ha! ha! ha!

Gay. 'Sdeath, leave your Impertinence—Prithee how came you and I ſo familiar?

Toy. Lord, you are as cruſty as a ſickly Miſer to a Depending Heir. Come, Madam, I want that poor Gentleman ſhould be put out of ſuſpence.

Court. Sir!

Mar.

Mar. Nay, no quarrelling—Mr. *Courtly*, from this time forwards, I deſire you will lay aſide all Hopes, and Fears, for I now diſcharge you as my Servant.

Gay. 'Sdeath!

Col. Why, Couſin, are you mad?

Mar. Have Patience——I give you now my Hand, with it my Heart, and make you now my Maſter.

Court. Health to the Sick is not more welcome, I receive you as the greateſt Bleſſing Heav'n had in ſtore.

Toy. Fire and Brimſtone!

Gay. You are out of Suſpenſe now, Sir.

Col. Joy to you, *Marilla*, I'll be bound you've made a worthy Choice, and done Juſtice.

Gay. I wanted but this to make me compleatly happy.

Toy. Sure, Madam, you are not in earneſt!

Gay. You are only fobb'd, Sir.

Enter Fairman, *dragging in* Sneaksby.

Fair. An impudent Villain! to make a Brothel of my Houſe!

Sneak. How did I know 'twas your Houſe, when I was ſo drunk, I did not know myſelf—beſide you need not make ſuch a to-do about it; I did no harm as I know of—

Gay. What's the matter, Sir, that your intended Son-in-law is in this Condition?

Fair. No, no, Captain, I'll have no ſuch drunken lewd Wretches in my Family—Sending juſt now to look for him, to know what was the reaſon his Aunt did not come to ſeal the Writings, where do you think he was found? but in the Cockloft, where it ſeems he had lain all Night with the Wench that feeds the Poultry.

Col. A bleſſed Husband you had choſe for me, truly, Sir!

Fair. I was wrong indeed, in believing thou could'ſt be happy with ſuch an Idiot—and rejoice I have made this Diſcovery before it was too late.

Sneak. Marry what care I—I can have a Wife I warrant

rant you; but Aunt ſhall know how you have us'd me—mayhap ſhe may tell you your own.

Gay. Here's another fobb'd too——Come, cheer up Man, you ſee you have a Companion in Tribulation.

Fair. Pray leave my Houſe, and tell your Aunt there's no occaſion for the Writings now.

Gay. I believe you may ſpare yourſelf that Trouble, Sir, for I expect her here every moment, with her new Husband.

Fair. Husband! why, is ſhe marry'd?

Gay. Yes, faith, and to one, who, I'll engage, will take care not a Foot of her Eſtate ſhall deſcend to this Gentleman.

Fair. I'm glad on't——tho' this News yeſterday wou'd have been a very great Diſappointment to me.

Enter Graſpall.

Ha! who have we here? a Stranger indeed! Mr. *Graſpall.*

Graſp. Ay, truly, Mr. *Fairman*, I don't often viſit—but my *Pudſy* has taken a Fancy to be mighty merry to-day, and I love to humour her——ſo if you, your Niece, and Daughter, and all this good Company will take a Dinner with her, ye ſhall have a hearty Welcome.——As for the reſt of her Entertainment, let her anſwer, I never trouble myſelf with thoſe things.

Fair. Miracles are not ceas'd, I find!

Graſp. What ſay you, Sir, will you do us the Favour? I hope he is engag'd. [*Aſide.*

Fair. Sir, 'tis a Favour you ſo ſeldom ask, that I believe nobody will refuſe it you— Gentlemen—Captain, you hear the Invitation—can you go?

Court. O! by all means, Sir.

Gay. I'll wait upon you, Sir.

Toy. Am I in the Number of your Gueſts, Sir.

Graſp. Ay, ay, all of you, if there were a hundred—I ſhall expect you ſoon——your Servant, and I wiſh the firſt Diſh may choak you. [*Exit.*

Fair. There muſt be ſomething extraordinary has happen'd to occaſion this Fit of Generoſity——let us go.

If

If that which is moſt rare is counted beſt,
We cannot want it in a Miſer's Feaſt. [*Ex.*

Enter Beaumont, *and* Graſpall.

Beau. Ay, now I like you Mr. *Graſpall*——this is done like a Man who knows how to uſe his Fortune—I look on Hoſpitality to be the moſt pleaſurable of any Vertue, and when you have once try'd it, I don't doubt but the whole Country will very often find the Effects of it.

Graſp. You'll find yourſelf exceedingly out in your Politics, if you do think ſo, that I can tell you.

Beau. Once or twice a Weak at leaſt, I ſuppoſe, one may expect to find good Company here.

Graſp. 'Sdeath! he wants to take out his 2000 *l.* in Board, I believe. [*Aſide.*] As often as I can, Sir *Harry*—but, alas! I am infirm and crazy—very crazy—and ſometimes can't bear the Sight of a Fire, or the Smell of dreſſing Meat for a Quarter of a Year together.

Beau. Poor Man! but you need not incommode yourſelf with that——a cold Collation, with three or four Dozen of *Champagne* and *Burgundy*, will ſerve well enough——Your Friends will excuſe the reſt on account of your Diſpoſition.

Graſp. They ſhall when I give it 'em. [*Aſide.*] But, Sir *Harry*, I can't endure a Noiſe.

Beau. As for that, you have a large Houſe here, and may eaſily retire into ſome remote Part of it, where you won't be diſturb'd———Your Gueſts will be contented to ſpare you, provided you leave your Wife, and the Fiddles to entertain 'em.

Graſp. That wou'd be fine indeed.——'Sbud! I'll ſell my Houſe, and live in *Wales* among the Mountains, where nobody will attempt to come near me for fear of breaking their Necks.

Beau. I think you look ill now——I am afraid you won't be able to let us have your Company to-day—if you find yourſelf out of Order, pray don't hazard growing worſe by an Over-Complaiſance———I'll anſwer for it, nobody will take it ill if you ſhut up your ſelf all day.

Graſp.

Graſp. The Devil I will—no, no, Sir *Harry*, I am mighty well——mighty well as can be, and ſo all my good Friends ſhall find——Here they come.

Enter Gaylove, Courtly, Toywell, Fairman, Marilla, *and* Celemena.

You are welcome, Sirs, heartily welcome all——

Fair. Sir, we thank you.

Court. We are all oblig'd to you——Sir *Harry*, your moſt humble Servant——

Beau. Yours, Sir——Ladies, yours——but where's your Wife, Mr. *Graſpall*? your fair Viſitors will think themſelves unwelcome while ſhe is abſent——

Graſp. I'll go and ſee for her.

Beau. I'll ſave you the Trouble, if you pleaſe, Sir—you know I am free here. [*Exit.*

Graſp. Ay, and ſo ſhou'd they all be on the ſame Conditions. Come, Gentlemen—— Mrs. *Celemena*, Mrs. *Marilla*, pray ſit down——you'll excuſe me, I don't love much Ceremony—but pray be merry.

Fair. Wine, Sir, gives a Life to Converſation—after Dinner, when the chearful Glaſs goes round, you may expect we ſhall be heartily merry.

Wife within.] Murder! Murder!

Fair. Ha! what's this?

Court. Murder cry'd.

Fair. Your Wife's Voice.

Enter Beaumont *and* Amadea *fighting*, *Mrs.* Graſpall *following.*

Beau. Villain! to abuſe ſo worthy a Man! but from my Arm thou ſhalt receive the juſt Reward of thy Treachery.

Amad. I fear you not.

Wife. Part 'em, part 'em.

Court. What's the Matter, Sir *Harry*?

Beau. Baſe Villain! and thou, ungrateful Woman!

Wife. Oh! Sir *Harry*, you will not be ſo barbarous to expoſe me?

Graſp. Why? what's the Meaning of all this?

Beau.

Beau. Not expoſe you, Madam! yes, to the whole World——you that cou'd wrong ſo kind, ſo tender a Husband.

Graſp. Ha! how's this?

Beau. So good, ſo true a Friend, ſo worthy a Man, and one ſo infinitely fond of you, ſhall receive no Pity, no Regard from me——You muſt know, Gentlemen, that going to ſeek this Lady, for whom till now I had the greateſt Reſpect, I found her in the Embraces of that young Gallant—They ſtarted when they ſaw me, and tho' my Sword was in a Moment ready to revenge my injur'd Friend, his was not tardy in Defence—but tho' you have prevented me at preſent, I ſhall find a time to make the Villain ſmart.

Court. I'm amaz'd.

Fair. She that was eſteem'd ſo vertuous!

Ty. They are all ſo till caught.

Graſp. And haſt thou done this? Haſt thou made a Cuckold of thy old Hubby—Ah Cockatrice!

Wife. I ſee Surprize in every Face, and know my Reputation has been hitherto ſo fair, that I believe ſome here ſcarce credit what they hear; but I diſdain to be a Hypocrite, nor will deny the Truth—This lovely Youth, this Darling of my Soul, has indeed receiv'd whatever Favours he cou'd intreat, or Love prompt me to grant.

Col. Monſtrous Impudence!

Mar. I never heard the like.

Graſp. And do you own it then? have you no Shame?

Wife. You taught me to deſpiſe all Senſe of Shame, when laughing at that Notion which the World calls Vertue, you forc'd me, contrary to my Nature, to my Inclinations, to the Principles my Youth was bred to obſerve, to yield myſelf a Prey to your inſatiate Avarice, and his baſe Deſires.

Fair. How!

Wife. Did you not ſell me? lett me out to Hire, and forc'd my trembling Vertue to obey—Did I not kneel, and weep, and beg——but you had receiv'd the Price you ſet me at, and I muſt yield, or be turn'd out a Beggar.

Fair.

Fair. What! lett his Wife for hire!

Court. Agree for *Money* to his own Diſhonour!

Toy. Egad, if I had known that, I'd have been a Cuſtomer—prithee what doſt thou demand, old Lucre? ha!

Graſp. Fop! Fool! Oh that I were dead!

Wife. Since you have taught me, I'll now experience that Charm Mankind's ſo fond of, Variety—I'll give a Looſe to each unbounded Appetite, range thro' all Degrees of Men, nor ſhall you dare to contradict my Pleaſures.

Graſp. Pray kill me——will nobody kill me?

Gay. Why truly, Sir, as the Caſe ſtands, I think 'tis the greateſt Kindneſs can be done you.

Wife. But do not imagine you ſhall ever reap any Advantage from my Crimes—I have broke open your Cloſet, and the 2000 *l.* Sir *Harry* paid you for ſeducing me, I have beſtow'd on this dear Man.

Graſp. Oh! Oh! the Money gone too!

Wife. You ſhall find what 'tis to have a vicious Wife—Do you not now repent what you have done, and wiſh I cou'd reſume my Virtue—tho' it ſhou'd coſt you twice as much as you receiv'd for my renouncing it?

Graſp. I do indeed, I ſee my Error now 'tis too late——Oh damn'd, damn'd Avarice!

Wife. You wou'd not tempt me then, were it again to do.

Graſp. No.

Wife. Not for the greateſt Conſideration.

Graſp. Not for the Univerſe——but do not plague me, I ſhall not live to endure it long.

Wife. Stay, Sir, your Sorrow moves me; if I may believe your Penitence ſincere, I can return to your Embraces a true, a faithful, and a vertuous Wife.

Graſp. What new Invention to diſtract me more?

Beau. She tells you Truth by Heav'n—that ſeeming Gentleman with whom I fought, and who you think has injur'd you, has not the Pow'r—Appear, my Love, without Diſguiſe——See, Sir, a Woman and my Wife.

Omn. How!

Gay. Amaden!

Amad.

Amad. The ſame, dear Couſin——much happier than when you ſaw me laſt, by the addition of Sir *Harry*'s Love confirm'd.

Gay. I wiſh you Joy.

Graſp. May I believe my Eyes?

Beau. They do not deceive you, Sir——this Plot was laid on purpoſe to cure you, if 'twas poſſible, of that covetous, ſordid Diſpoſition, which has ever been the Blot of your Character——and a little alſo to revenge the Contempt you ſeem'd to have of ſo good a Wife——when you were willing to chaffer her for Gold——

Court. 'Twas handſomely contriv'd——

Cel. I am glad to find ſhe has brought herſelf off; for I proteſt I trembled for her two Minutes ago.

Beau. Come, Sir, if you have any Conſideration of Honour, and the eternal Infamy and Diſgrace ſhe has preſerv'd you from, you will admire her Virtues, and entreat her Pardon——

Graſp. Pudſy, dear *Pudſy*, can'ſt thou forgive me.

Wife. Riſe, Sir, this is not a Poſture for a Husband—I form'd this Deſign only to make you worthy of that Name, and ſhall ever make it my Study to prove myſelf a moſt obedient Wife.

Fair. This is a happy Concluſion, indeed; but here's more Company, Mr. *Graſpall.*

Enter Widow. Dogood, Shamble.

Wid. Your Servant, Gentlemen, your Servant, Ladies; I beg pardon for my long Abſence, but, but—a,—I cou'd not riſe to-day, I think.

Gay. Sir *Triſtram* play'd his part then pretty well, laſt Night, I find.

Fair. Joy, Madam——you have ſtole a Wedding, I hear.

Wid. People of Quality never talk of theſe Affairs till they are accompliſh'd, Mr. *Fairman.*——Sir *Triſtram* here was ſo preſſing.

Court. And your Ladyſhip ſo eaſy——

Graſp. Sir *Triſtram!* why are you all mad? why, this is *Jonathan Shamble*——ſure I know *Jonathan Shamble*; he was Footman to a Nephew of mine about four or five Years ago, when I was laſt in *London.*

All.

All. Ha, ha, ha! a Footman!

Gay. Well, well, Mr. *Graſpall*, he's a Man of an Eſtate now, and 'twill be unmannerly to rip up Pedigrees.

Wid. I am not cheated, ſure——what's the meaning of all this?

Sham. Why, faith, my dear Wife, ſince the Truth muſt out, I only borrow'd my Quality to make myſelf agreeable to you——

Wid. Villain! Rogue! I'll tear you to pieces.

Sham. Hold, hold, good Lady, Paſſion—have mercy on my Cloaths, for they are none of my own.

Gay. Patience, Madam, Patience! Boxing does not become a Woman of Quality.

Wid. A Footman! a Footman! but I'll have him hang'd, he's a Cheat, he has marry'd me in a falſe Name; but you ſhan't think to carry it ſo——I was not born Yeſterday: I'll go to a Lawyer immediately.

Gay. Hark ye, hark me, Madam——your Anger will do you but little Service—he has wedded you, bedded you, and got your Writings, and if you conſider calmly on the Matter, you'll find nothing can be done in this Affair for your Satisfaction——you had better therefore quietly forgive the Impoſition; and as you have a good Eſtate, turn part of it into ready Money, and e'en buy him a Title——ſuch Things are done every day in *London*—and when once you have made a Gentleman of him, ev'ry body won't know by what means he came to be one.

Wid. Why that's true, indeed.

Gay. You'll find it your beſt way.

Wid. Well, ſince there's no Help, I'll ſell all I have, and away to *London*.

Gay. You may be happy enough——I dare ſwear he'll make you a good Husband.

Wid. That's all I have to hope.

Gay. Well, I think I have been very buſy in endeavouring to ſettle the Happineſs of others——'tis high time now to conſider my own, which lies only in your power, Sir, to beſtow.

Fair. Sir, Mr. *Courtly* has juſt now acquainted me with

with the Kindneſs you have for my Daughter—I know your Father, and I approve of your Character——— therefore if ſhe is of the ſame Opinion (for I will never go about to force her Inclinations more) ſhe is yours, with the ſame Fortune I deſign'd to give the Squire—what ſay you, *Celemena?*

Cel. I ſhou'd have endeavour'd to obey you, Sir, ev'n where my Nature was moſt reluctant——but in this, I confeſs, you've choſen with my Eyes.

Fair. Why, then bleſs you both—I think poor Mr. *Toywell* is the only unhappy Man among us.

Toy. Faith, Sir, I am poſitively eaſy: I'll e'en trip to *Bath* this Seaſon, and I don't doubt but I ſhall there find an Opportunity with ſome kind Damſel to repay my Loſs in *Marilla.*

Beau. *How ſimply Politic is fooliſh Man!*
How poor, how vain, our deepeſt-laid Deſigns,
To the all-ſeeing Eye of Providence!
Like theſe weak Webs by Æſop's Spider wrought,
To ſtop the ſwift-wing'd Swallow in her Flight:
Who, with Contempt, ſurveys her fruitleſs Pains,
Her Folly pities, and her Rage diſdains;
Baffles her Wiles, breaks through the tender Snare,
And, unconcern'd, divides the yielding Air.

FINIS.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by the AUTHOR.

E Women, who by Nature love to teaze ye,
Will have it, that the neweſt things beſt pleaſe ye;
Save them, to-night, our Graſpall *claims* Compaſſion,
For us'er, ſince Bridal Antlers were in faſhion,
Heard ye of one, who to a Beauty marry'd,
Wou'd join have been a Cuckold, and miſcarry'd.
This Man's of Novelty, *a Proof moſt* ample!
Had ye but Grace to copy out *th' Example;*
Each well comply'd with by his kinder Fair-One,
Wou'd own that Graſpall's *Fate's a* new *and* rare one.

Well, we have ſhewn ye Av'rice *to the Life,*
A rich old Miſer, melting *down his* Wife,
Not into ſoft Deſires, *and* amorous Puling,
He, ſober Thinker! *was for no ſuch* Fooling.
Tho many a ſparkling Jewel grac'd his Honey,
He thought no Gem, about *her, worth that Money:*
Two Thouſand Pounds, he judg'd, would ſoften *Satyr,*
And weigh *againſt the* heavy'ſt Horns *in Nature.*
Strange Bargain! but ſince Husband *wiſh'd to ſtrike it,*
What Whim could work with Madam—*not to* like *it!*

'Twas

'Twas this—*she shunn'd, when 'twas her* Husband's *task*
What her own Bounty *would have given for* asking.
Women, *however* stirring *in their Way*,
Are ne'er too stiff *to, when they move* t'obey;
They *rather would* (*if I can* understand 'em)
Not do *at all*——*than* do *as* Spouse *commands 'em*.

But to be grave——*the Heroine of our Play*
Gains Glory by a hard, and dangerous Way:
Reboy'd, her Lovey pleads——*she fears no Spy*,
Her Husband favours—*and her* Pulse *beats high*.
Warm glows his Hope——*her Wishes* catch *the Fire*,
Mutual *their* Flame, *yet Virtue quells Desire*.

Safe the Untempted *may defy Love's Call*,
Why should the Unencounter'd *fear to* fall?
Virtue must pass thro' Fire to prove its Weight,
And equal Danger make the Triumph great.